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DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY



LEVI GILBERT

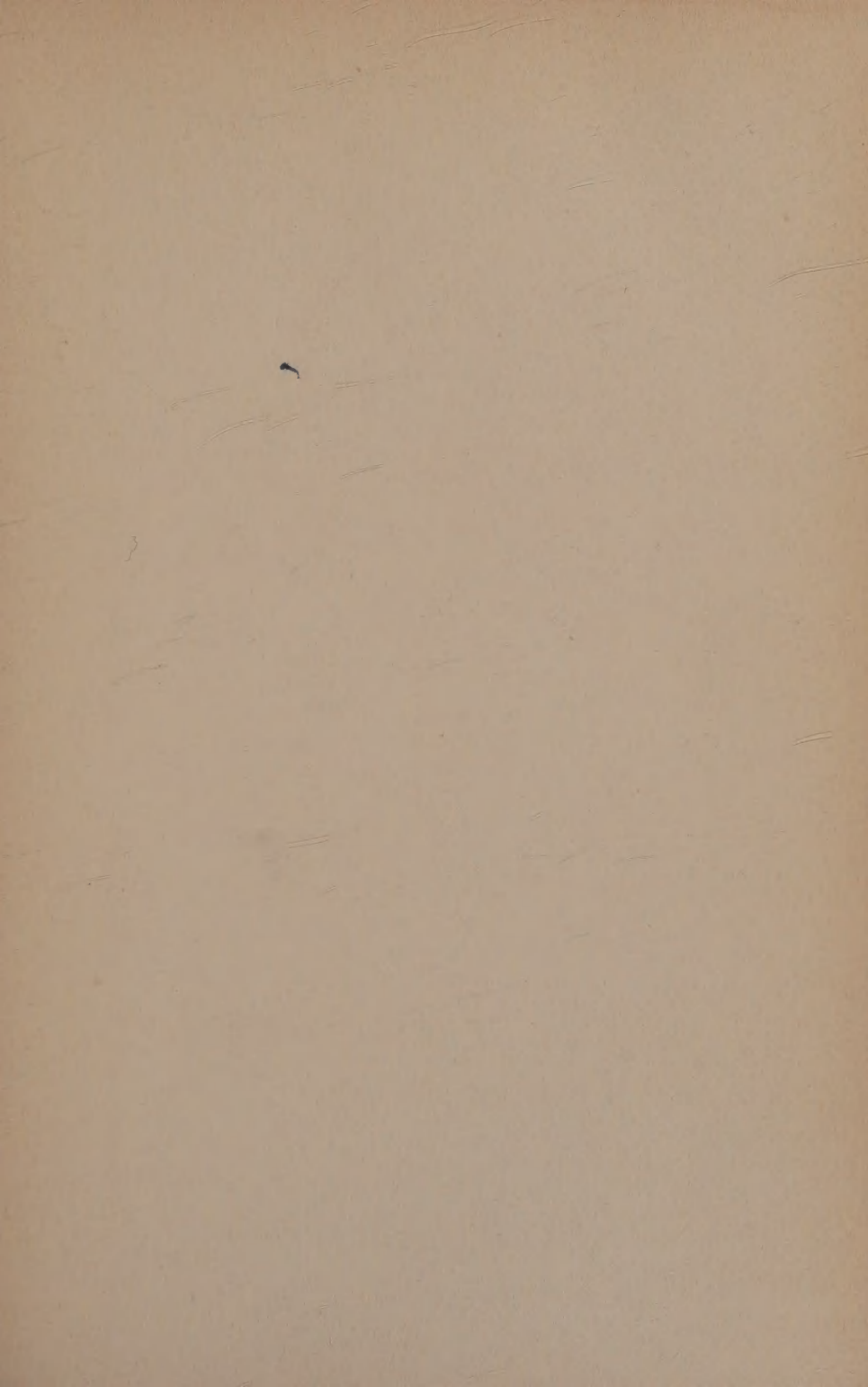


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DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY

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BY

LEVI GILBERT



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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
Preface.....	5
I. The Miracle of Power in Christ.....	9
II. The Opposing Power of Sin.....	36
III. Transforming Power Experienced.....	67
IV. The Mystery of the Power.....	86
V. The Bible and Spiritual Power.....	111
VI. Power in the Inner Life.....	138
VII. Power for the Life of Service.....	171
VIII. Spirituality the Urgent Need.....	206
IX. Revival Power in the Church.....	243
X. The Preacher and the Revival.....	267
XI. The Laymen and the Revival.....	296
XII. Ideals and Methods in Evangelism.....	333
XIII. The Personal Element in Evangelism.....	369

PREFACE

THIS book has been written under the conviction that the mystical element in Christianity has been of late years too greatly neglected, with quite serious results; that there must be a return to the clear recognition that the religion of Christ depends for its effectiveness and triumph upon a divine, supernatural power, defying all naturalistic explanations. Christianity is the religion of power. Its true nature can be understood only as it is interpreted in terms of power. Its earliest apostles were to be endued with "power from on high." That pentecostal endowment is the indispensable requisite of the Church in every age. That power, proceeding from God through Christ and creating its own specific product, has manifested itself through the centuries in the re-creation and radical transformation of human lives. It is mysterious, inexplicable, but undeniably real, self-attesting—an emanation from the Almighty.

The religion of Jesus is ethical, but when it is portrayed purely as a system of ethics it loses its main value, essence and forcefulness. It is profoundly philosophic, but is vastly more than a philosophy. It contains a lofty theology, but its vitalizing efficiency lies not in a compilation of dogmas. It is more than any theories, abstractions, or intellectualisms; it is dynamic—an effluence from the Omnipotent.

Without organization, doubtless, church activities

could not be carried on. To provide a means for human effort there must be adequate machinery and established methods. But there is always a danger that the machine or the routine shall itself unconsciously come to be considered a substitute for the true energizing force and spiritualizing agent. Failure will characterize every attempt to evangelize the world when reliance is placed primarily on clever planning and ingenious devices.

The writer of these pages would not intimate that the Church of to-day is devoid of spirituality. That supreme grace exists in large proportions and is evidently operative. But the perplexing and enormous problems which face Christianity in the pressing responsibilities of evangelistic and missionary work in America and Europe, and on the Oriental side of the globe, make imperative the positive accession of a double portion—yea, a quadruple portion—of the life and potency of the Spirit if conquest is to be rationally expected. A fuller and deeper spirituality in the Church is the absolute and urgent necessity in this generation.

It is the earnest hope of the author that this volume may come with its message to very many laymen who are awakening to the claims of God upon them in bringing the gospel in forms of life to their fellow laymen everywhere; to consecrated pastors striving to arouse their memberships and communities to the demands of the soul in an age when material considerations are so insistent; to faithful evangelists who, by their preaching of the Word, would quicken consciences and lead men to repentance, conversion, and the loftiest attainments of grace; and to all self-sacrificing missionaries pro-

claiming at home and in far distant parts of the earth to needy millions the infinitely precious truths of the Fatherhood of God, the redemption through Christ, the inspiration and sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

LEVI GILBERT.

CHAPTER I

THE MIRACLE OF POWER IN CHRIST

RIDING one day on the traction cars, and coming to a crossing where several lines met, all at once our car and all the others came to a standstill. "Lost the power," said the conductor to an inquiring passenger. After a few minutes' waiting, on looking down the avenue he saw one car start, and exclaimed, "He's got the power!" And as he spoke our car moved on.

The parallel between his condition and the Church's is real and striking. Just as his car was inert and helpless without the electricity from the power house, so the Church is lifeless and inoperative without the all-necessary spirituality from God. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." This is the only condition in which men have power with other men and prevail. It is indispensable.

The Bible is full of references to this need of divine power. God "gives power to the faint." Paul knew "the effectual working of his power." Jesus returned from the wilderness "in the power of the Spirit." Pentecost is a reality—is a perpetual necessity and a perpetual privilege, and not an isolated event in the past—and is not to be explained on any naturalistic principles. The Church must be something more than an ecclesiastical organization, or a club under religiously social auspices. It must be charged with supernatural power from

celestial dynamos—must be the earthly conductor of God's life and energy for men. Otherwise all its machinery stops and is useless. Christians must be filled, like Peter and Paul, with the Holy Ghost and with power. "Getting the power" is not some sort of hysteria or epileptic seizure, not a piece of fanaticism or insanity, but the prime necessity of any real being and activity in the Christian, and of any evangelizing potency and effectiveness in the world. All human culture and all churchly methods must be vitalized from on high.

Conduct may well be, as Matthew Arnold insisted, three fourths of religion, and to-day we are seeing clearly the indefensible folly of sneering at what thoughtless people style "mere morality." Morality—righteousness—is the element in religion without which it is a superstition or a fanaticism. It is the grandest product of a right faith, and the "fruit of the Spirit"—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control"—shows that, in Christianity, morality is inseparable from religion. In ancient paganism, as in the systems of present-day heathenism, this connection between worship and creed and life and character was fatally sundered.

Nevertheless, there was some sort of meaning in the old reference to "mere morality." Christianity must be ever perceived to be infinitely more than a system of ethics. It cannot be reduced to the proportions of a convenient compendium of moralisms and maxims for living, such as is contained in the books of Confucius, the "Meditations" of Marcus Aurelius, or a "Poor Richard's Almanac." Its distinguishing mark is the presence in it of a supernatural Spirit

which works with effectual power. This power it is which differentiates Christianity from other religions. For many centuries before Christ men had known that in the moral realm they were not measuring up to their possibilities. Christ has made the obligations of the moral law vastly more luminous and binding for us. But before his Advent men recognized the claims of conscience, felt the demands of the higher law, gave expression to their ideals and aspirations. Christ, indeed, spake as never man spake on the problems of the soul; but there had been great teachers and masters—Moses, Socrates, Plato, Buddha, Confucius, the Talmudists—in the world before him. Christianity cannot assert its preëminence and uniqueness in the world, simply and only as a revelation of the laws and rules of morality.

But, with all their perception of what they ought to do, it was the uniform confession of these ancients that they did not attain to their goal, that they lacked the power to carry out their noblest purposes. Their highest endeavors ended in defeat. The Roman cried, "I approve the better and yet the worse pursue." And Saint Paul voices the pathetic confession of the Hebrews: "The good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practice." This confession is one that is repeated every day among men of our own time. Lecturers in an ethical culture society may discourse glowingly on the possibilities of man's spiritual attainments. The great fraternal orders, in their rituals, may elaborate lofty conceptions of moral excellence; but still there is evermore the old lament over non-attainment—"To will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not." There is nothing in life at once more pa-

thetic and affecting than to behold the heroic endeavors many men are making, without Christ, to live up to the highest demands of their clearest moments of insight. Their vision of truth and right is unobscured. They strive after it. But, feeble and frail in themselves, and assailed by passions and temptations, they are overthrown again and again, and have no continuous or permanent victory.

It is right at this point that the particular and distinguishing characteristic of the religion of Christ is to be found. He promised his disciples that they should be endued with power from on high when the Holy Ghost should come upon them. For this power they were to tarry in Jerusalem. He definitely announced that all power was given unto him. It was he who was to speak power into helpless souls—to energize them so that their natural weakness and inefficiency should be overcome, and they should be able, not only to dream and resolve and plan in the field of the Spirit, but also actually to achieve. And when Saint Paul—looking back over the melancholy record of his years when not what he would do did he practice, but the very thing that he hated, that he did, with the mind serving the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin—cried out, “Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?” he was able, aided by his own marvelous and transforming experience, to reply to himself immediately, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The gladness of that cry has thrilled our sinning and baffled humanity through the centuries since, and thrills it yet. In America, where men honestly say that they *want* to be good, but admit with contri-

tion that, unaided, they *can't*; and, in other lands, where the systems of faith are inert and uninspirational and noneffective for good amid multiplied depravities, there is immeasurable joy in the promise of a Spirit of Truth, who, without failure, shall guide into all truth and make the impossible possible. "Without me, ye can do nothing," says Christ; "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me," exclaimed Paul. And since then the Church has gone on proclaiming in joyous hymns its "Year of Jubilee" and singing

"Ye slaves of sin and hell,
Your liberty receive."

We would not imply that all Christians have achieved absolute mastery over all temptations, that they are perfect and never overthrown. But they "press toward the mark," and they have that within them and on their side which shall ultimately make them "more than conquerors"—which shall overcome the evil in them with good. Sin has no more *dominion* over them—does not reign and rule in them. The "strong man" has been bound by a stronger than he. The "backbone of the rebellion" was broken at Vicksburg and at Gettysburg. There was much more fighting, and defeat alternated with victory for the national cause; but Appomattox was never an uncertainty, and it came in due time. So it is in the campaigns of the spiritual life. The prayer of all men everywhere must in time come to be that of the Christian worshiper to-day:

"Holy Spirit, Power Divine!
Fill and nerve this will of mine;
By thee may I strongly live,
Bravely bear and nobly strive."

This dynamic, transmuting energy puts the religion of Christ in a class by itself. Other religions may have partial glimpses of the truth, but Christianity has more than truth—it has power. And its Founder, from whom emanates this mighty agency, is thereby differentiated from all other founders of other faiths or religious systems. He is not only “a teacher come from God,” but a miracle-worker in the realm of the spiritual as well as in that of the physical. There is a vast difference between teaching truth and exemplifying it in life, and then making that life potent for regenerating dead souls.

A friend once loaned us a handbook on theosophy. We have known something of the system and also something of the career of its modern expounder, Madame Blavatsky. To speak of her actions as “eccentricities” is a species of amiable charity, but we are not concerned particularly about that. This handbook says: “There are many persons who are apt to measure the value of any system of philosophy by the personal habits of its exponents, and, consequently, the theosophist is asked to reconcile certain personal eccentricities observable in Madame Blavatsky with the ideals of human progress and perfection held out by theosophy.”

The writer then goes on to say that he does not attempt to reconcile them, and that it is a matter of comparative indifference. Whether genius is consistent or inconsistent with itself in the ideals it conceives is quite unimportant—truth is truth through whatever channel it may come. Tennyson may smoke a clay pipe and Swedenborg take snuff, but “we must be content as servants of all that is good, beautiful, and true in life to be uplifted by the fact,

to be guided by the philosopher, and to tolerate the *man* in all his mortal weakness; we can acknowledge the æsthetic beauty of the one and the intellectual strength of the other without committing ourselves to an assent of their personal failures, habits, or peculiarities."

There is a certain measure of truth in such a statement. Doubtless many have been helped by the pulpit proclamations of preachers who were afterward found to be of unsound life, and who perhaps had been living falsely and hypocritically. Most Christians would acknowledge that they themselves are not practically living up to the high demands of the gospel they profess, and that their failure is not in minor matters relating to pipes and to snuff-boxes, but in more serious departures from moral obligations. But the Christian, though aware of his own defects, has supreme satisfaction in pointing to the Founder of his faith—the Perfect One, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth—who not only showed the way, taught the truth, expounded the life, but could say to a critical and hostile world, "*I am* the way, the truth, and the life"; to obey his call, "Follow me," is to be led into all ideal excellence. Theosophy may say "the truth has claims of its own apart from the idiosyncrasies of its exponents," but this does not apply to Christ who incarnated and practically showed forth all he taught, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. And herein Christianity will always show its immeasurable superiority to every other faith, and to theosophy or any modern substitute for the religion of Jesus. Where else in the world or in history has there been another than Jesus who could

calmly ask, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" What system of philosophy, either ancient or modern, has ever practically demonstrated its ability to break the power of inbred sin and set the prisoner free? If philosophy could have saved the world, salvation would have come from the Greeks. But of what philosopher could it ever have been said that he "taketh away the sin of the world"?

Nothing is more remarkable, in reading the records of rescue missions, than to note the marvelous results accomplished in the lives of ignorant and imbruted men who simply called upon Jesus to save them. Frequently Mr. Hadley, in his Water Street Mission, told his fellow workers to keep away from some poor sinner who was agonizingly appealing to Christ. "Let him alone," he would say; "Jesus has got his grip on him." And, sure enough, by and by there would come a shout, and the "great transaction" would be "done," the miracle of the new birth worked.

Now, most preachers would be inclined to help the seeker through by considerable information as to the nature of faith, as to the character of the Saviour, as to how he saves, as to the evidences of salvation; and perhaps they would volunteer the information to the seeker that he was saved long before he had any assurance of it himself. Better more frequently follow Mr. Hadley's plan and "let him alone"—let "Jesus deal with him."

This may seem to some like superstition. They will think that the situation demands more philosophy and more theology. But why? If Jesus is a living Christ, and able to exert divine power in radically transforming human souls, why should he not

do it when called upon earnestly—as when blind Bartimæus called on him—to “have mercy”? Is it necessary to possess a theologian’s comprehension of him and his work—or even that of an average Christian?

We do not decry an intelligent faith, and do not exalt a “blind faith.” But when a man brings the best faith he has—as did the uninformed thief on the cross—however unintelligent and almost stupid and superstitious it may seem; when he comes, in his dull way, and with his vision bleared by sin, believing, somehow, that Jesus “can do this,” there is every evidence that Christ graciously takes him as he is, ignorance, sin and all, and blesses and saves him. But some may ask, “If about all the poor wretch knows is the name of Christ, why not as well call upon Jupiter to save?” And the sufficient answer is, Because Jupiter does not exist, has not saved, and cannot save. Christ does exist; he lives, and has saved, and does save. This is enough. “All hail the power of Jesus’ name!”

“In the name of God let us all cease trying to find it,” remarked Dr. Campbell Morgan once when the discussion turned on the origin of the great religious movement in Wales a few years ago. “At least let us cease trying to trace it to any one man or convention. You cannot trace it, and I will not trace it to-night. Whence has it come? All over Wales—I am giving you roughly the result of the questioning of fifty or more persons at random in the week—a praying remnant have been agonizing before God about the state of the beloved land, and it is through that that the answer of fire has come. You tell me that the revival originates with Roberts. I tell you

that Roberts is a product of the revival. You tell me that it began in an Endeavor meeting where a dear girl bore testimony. I tell you that was part of the result of a revival breaking out everywhere. If you and I could stand above Wales, looking at it, you would see fire breaking out here and there and yonder and somewhere else, without any collusion or prearrangement. It is a divine visitation in which God—let me say this reverently—in which God is saying to us, ‘See what I can do without the things you are depending on; see what I can do in answer to a praying people; see what I can do through the simplest, who are ready to fall in line, and depend wholly and absolutely upon me.’ ” The inexplicable, miraculous power that evidently resides in Jesus has been the enigma of two thousand years, and is yet as mysterious and as far from solution as ever.

Canon Farrar once wrote: “If the son of a Bengalee peasant, hanged by order of the lieutenant-governor of the Northwest Province because of the mischief he was making among the Moslems of Lahore, were to establish his faith on the ruins of Westminster Abbey and install the successor of his leading disciple on the throne of the British empire, we should be compelled to the inference that there is an Infinite behind; nothing but a God could control such a machine.” And he then adds in regard to Jesus: “It needed a fulcrum in eternity to make such a change in the things of time with so weak a lever as the life of this Galilæan.”

Surely there is Infinity in the power of the cross. The ancient Greek and Roman must have regarded with unfeigned wonder what was accomplished in

the name of "the holy child Jesus." Christianity came presenting no new philosophy, no fresh metaphysical system, for the cure of the world's ills. Its method was not preëminently intellectual, but moral and spiritual. It came not with a system, but with a Person. It originated not in Greece, the land of culture, but in Palestine, the most narrow, isolated, peculiar, and prejudiced of the Roman possessions, and from the most ignominious town of its most despised province. It came preaching faith in One who, in the estimation of the historians and rulers of his own race, was seditious, blaspheming, arrayed against the local authorities; One who, it might seem to Pilate, stirred up the poor to revolutionize the laws; who himself, a mere mechanic and plebeian, a poor, wandering vagabond, condemned by his own nation to the most shameful of all imaginable deaths, perished as a malefactor on the cross, crucified as one part fool and three parts adventurer.

And its first disciples, converts, and propagators were fishermen, women, and outcasts of the lowest social scale. It preached to those who joyed in the life of revels, games, and banquets what to them seemed a ridiculous and unreasonable doctrine—that of self-denial, humility, and unselfishness. It insisted that salvation must be by Another, and that the individual could not save himself; that the salvation must come, not as the result of learning and processes of reasoning (wherein man might have pride), but only in trust and faith. It held up the cross of Christ as the symbol of all salvation, and pointed to him as the world's Redeemer.

He must be for the Jew the "sign" of power he

asked for. This Man, whom the Jew looked upon as an offense and with indignation, who seemed so little like the Captain of the Lord's host, must be accepted as the incarnation of all power in the natural and spiritual realms! The Jew looked for a Conqueror and was pointed to a Peasant. While he was expecting a God, cleaving the heavens in majesty, he was shown a Babe in a manger. While he was hoping for a great Leader, who would throw off the yoke of Rome, he was presented with a companion of fishermen, and even an associate of publicans and sinners in the streets of the city. While he prayed for a conquering Immortal, his faith was asked for One who was expiring in agony between two malefactors. One could hardly imagine the indignation with which he might cry: "He, that fellow! He, the Messiah! He, the representative of our proud theocracy! He, the answer of the ages to the century-long expectation of a Deliverer! He, the Saviour of our grand race and nation! He, the culmination of the glorious line of patriarchs, judges, prophets, and kings! Away with him! Away with him!"

But it is precisely in these aspects of his shame and ignominy that Saint Paul puts the Christ before the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman world. He might have presented Jesus truthfully as a rabbi, leading a liberal movement, casting aside the shell of Judaism and proffering its purified essence as a world-religion to the nations; as a tribune of the people, undertaking their cause against an oppressive hierarchy; as a wonderful teacher who thrilled the hearts of men; as possessing mysterious and miraculous powers over nature, disease, and even death

itself; as having himself broken open his own tomb and ascended to the right hand of God in glory. But, ignoring these, he preferred to speak, even to the fastidious Greeks, of the cross, of a symbol more shameful than the gallows. He takes a poor crucified victim and exalts him to the Head of the universe.

While the Greeks regarded that crucifixion with scant interest and called it "foolishness"—only an isolated, unrelated event without philosophic significance, a death like thousands of others and without any particular bearing on life—it has become for the world just what Paul declared it was for him—both the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the modern world, quite as much as the ancient, cannot cure humanity of its sin and wretchedness through any philosophy, culture, or processes of education. Berlin, Paris, London, Boston, New York will fail here, with all their arts and schools, as Athens, Alexandria, Corinth, and Rome did before them. No amount of speculation about the soul, matter, nature, the universe, man, time, space, or eternity will heal our complaint or bring us spiritual health.

But there is a strange and subtle power in the cross. Men to-day worship power. They seek it in all the applications of steam and electricity. They crave it in their personal influence. And in the cross, with its revelation of love and suffering, there is a power that the rudest and most barbaric acknowledge. The most cultured are not beyond being moved by its wondrous pathos. Standing before it, after the ages have shown its influence, the scoff dies out upon the lips of the scorner, and

the heart of the believer swells with a rapture inexpressible. Yes, humanity shall indeed conquer by that sign! If ever the burden of man's woe is to be lifted from his weary shoulders, if ever the world is to be completely reconciled to God, if ever guilt and misery are to be banished from the universe, if ever a new and glad humanity is to people a purified and redeemed earth, it will be through no other instrument than that rough piece of wood upon which a life once went out in uttermost agony!

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time.

The Jesus who thus accomplished on that cross the world's redemption Carlyle designated as "our Divinest Symbol," and Schelling characterized as the "turning point of the world's history." Writers on the life of Christ have collected the remarkable confessions of great philosophers, poets, historians, many of them not "believers" in the technical sense, but, rather, strongly under the influence of skepticism and rationalism. It might be expected that those who admittedly enroll themselves as disciples of Jesus would praise and eulogize him; and, therefore, quotations from such theologians, preachers, saints, and followers may be said not to be very remarkable. It may be allowed that their expressions of love and admiration are natural, but these do not thereby lose their force. On the contrary, they are drawn from the deep experiences of a life lived intimately with Christ, from a rich inner consciousness touched into being by vital contact with the Vivifier himself.

Nevertheless, when testimony to Christ's great-

ness and influence is given by doubters themselves against the marked tendency of their minds to discount the Bible narrative and to minify or repudiate altogether the divine and supernatural, their words seem to be weighted doubly with significance. Strauss bears this witness: "He is the highest object we can possibly imagine in respect of religion: the Being without whose presence in the mind perfect piety is impossible." Dr. Congreve, the leader of the English Positivists, wrote: "The more truly you serve Christ, the more thoroughly you mold yourselves into his image, the more keen will be your sympathy and admiration." Dr. Martineau held to the Unitarian scheme of theology, but he was constrained to describe Christ as "the commissioned Prophet, the merciful Redeemer, the inspired Teacher, the perfect Model, the heavenly Guide." Matthew Arnold, who found difficulties in accepting Christianity's creed, could yet define God as "the Eternal who makes for righteousness, from whom Jesus came forth, whose Spirit governs the course of humanity." "Christ," says Keim, the rationalist biographer of Jesus, "is the crown of all the creations of God, God's image, the best-beloved, the master-workman and world-shaper in the history of mankind. He, and no other, is, and remains, the appointed standard bearer of the world's progress, who shall win over the quagmire and the spirits of darkness of the nether Cosmos." Heider's words are: "Jesus Christ is in the noblest and most perfect sense the realized ideal of humanity"; and Matthew Caludius, one of the people's poets of Germany, writes: "No one ever thus loved as Christ did, or did anything so truly great and good as the Bible tells

us of him ever enter into the heart of man. It is a holy form which rises before the poor pilgrim like a star in the night, and satisfies his innermost craving, his most secret yearnings and hopes."

If ever, in moments of reaction and doubt, any Christian is troubled with the temptation-suggestion that it is beyond probability that any being, so exalted and possessing such transcendent power as our creed represents Christ as having, could ever have lived, it will prove a reassurance and a tonic to him to read again these passages from the pens of geniuses who, though "perplexed in faith," felt themselves inevitably compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of Jesus in the world's pantheon.

We are aware that many of these brilliant rhetorical ascriptions do not hold in themselves the full content of the Christian's faith as to the Saviour; they do not imply all that our creeds and our beliefs affirm. But it is much that they go the lengths they do, and they plainly demonstrate the tremendous impression that Jesus invariably makes in the greatest intellects of the race, even those hampered by skepticisms, when they put themselves candidly face to face with him. In the presence of such frank, honest, and glad admission on the part, not only of the lofty minds who have bowed in simple faith before the Redeemer of men, but also of those imperial thinkers who have found it hard to enter the kingdom as little children, an infidelity, full of blank denials and irreverent scoffings, becomes, of all things, the most shallow and offensive.

But it is impossible to stop consistently with magnifying Jesus as the preëminent genius and molding influence of the race in all time. These very

encomiums carry us irresistibly further, on the assumption that Christ was simply the most remarkable and potent human being that ever lived. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory." But great as is the mystery involved in accepting the Christ of Luke and John, of Paul and Peter, and of the evangelical Church throughout the centuries, greater still is the mystery in seeking to account for the Incarnate One, in his depicted character and works and in his incalculable influence on humanity, on any merely naturalistic grounds. The effort to reduce the Jesus of the Gospels to the scale of other men has always met with dismal failure. He stands in a class by himself, unique, solitary.

Dr. Nicoll once wrote, when commenting on Jesus's question, "Whom say ye that I am?": "If Jesus had any reason to ask whom men took him to be, then the answer described is demonstrably wrong. For it means that Jesus was nobody in particular, whereas the question rests on his consciousness of a solitary and incomparable greatness. It was not only in the faith of his disciples, but in his own consciousness, that he filled a place which no other could fill. No ingenuity of criticism can eliminate this from the Gospels. It is as unambiguously present in the earlier evangelists as in John. It is as audible in a hundred words of which no mention is made of the Christ or the Father as in the most articulate statements of Jesus about himself. It is revealed when he says, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me'; or

‘Many shall say unto me in that day’; or ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor’; or ‘Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.’ It is not in names and titles and confessions of faith, put upon him by the adoring love of others, that Jesus is exhibited to us in a solitary and transcendent greatness; it is the whole picture in the Gospels which bears this character; the Person who is here presented to us lives and moves and has his being in it. We are debtors to him as we never can be to one another, and our relation to him determines everything both for our relation to God and to mankind at large. It is implied in all this that Jesus, both in relation to God and to the human race, was what no other could be, and it is such a solitary and incommunicable greatness of which we are conscious in every contact with him in the Gospels.”

And so—the last and most serious word—our intellectual appreciation of the majesty of Jesus, though vastly important, is utterly insufficient if we stop with it alone and do not go on to offer him the allegiance of our lives in uttermost trust and faithful service. Such a consecration as that is the solvent for all doubts. To quote Dr. Nicoll again: “He who has the New Testament faith in Christ, and who has been initiated by him into the life which is life indeed, knows that life has resources in it which are adequate to all the tasks which it encounters in experience, whatever be their character or scale. It is this which assures him, in the last resort, that the merely humanitarian conception of Christ is beneath the truth; he knows that Christ is actually doing for him what can be done by God alone. It is this also which forbids pessimism, be the outlook ever so

formidable; he hears the voice of Jesus, 'I have overcome the world.' "

Robert Browning, as all who have studied his profound poetical works are well aware, was a robust believer in the great religious verities, and a vigorous setter-forth of a positive Christian creed. He had no sympathy with those who dealt in negations. He had no liking for "the exhausted air-bell of the critic."

Sectarian controversies between Papists and Dissenters may not be very profitable or enjoyable; they may set

the pure air seething,
May poison it for healthy breathing.

But there is something worse than that:

The critic leaves no air to poison;
Pumps out with ruthless ingenuity
Atom by atom, and leaves you—vacuity.

The critic would fain inquire

Into the various sources whence
This Myth of Christ is derivable;

and, when he had done his best

The pearl of price, at reason's test,
Lay dust and ashes.

The critic would reduce Christianity to a simple system of ethics. To this attempt Browning makes conclusive answer, to which some of our present-day rationalists might well pay heed:

What is the point where He himself lays stress?
Does the precept run "Believe in good,
In justice, truth, now understood
For the first time?"—or "Believe in me
Who lived and died, yet essentially
Am Lord of Life?"

But even for the critic, with his "desiccated brain," Browning still holds some hope, and he prays:

When thicker and thicker the darkness fills
The world through his misty spectacles,
And he gropes for something more substantial
Than a fable, myth, or personification—
May Christ do for him what no mere man shall,
And stand confessed as the God of salvation!

Browning's prayer may well become our own for those of our day who have parted from the simple faith of the gospel, and have lost themselves in the mazes of their own uncertain speculations. This Christ of our faith is indeed no "fable, myth, or personification." He is one with the Father. He shows us the Father in his own life and character. He brings us to the Father—to him whom Whittier calls "The Eternal Goodness." That poem has endeared itself to all hearts by its wonderfully gracious and winning portraiture of the essential character of the all-merciful Father. We echo the words of poor Joe, as, dying, he tries to repeat after his friend the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father—yes, that's werry good." We remember how old Captain Peggotty, in "David Copperfield," starts out on his long quest of little Emily, saying, "I am going to seek her far and wide. If any hurt should come to me, remember that the last words I left for her was 'My unchanged love is with my darling child, and I forgive her.' " And we feel that God cannot be less tender and forgiving.

Herbert Spencer brings the assurance of science to faith when he speaks of the "Infinite and Eternal Energy" whose presence is everywhere about us; but the Christian has a sweeter and dearer name for

God than energy. Of necessity, the word "Father" escapes all the dreary limitations of an agnosticism which only knows it cannot know. We know whom we have believed—a Father will not keep the knowledge of himself away from his children. Lest man should be awed into dumbness by his sublimity and vastness, he draws near in familiarity and benignity. Materialism vanishes before the spell of those two syllables, "Father"—one word crashes through and destroys forever all purely mechanical constructions of the universe. God is our home in all generations. The universe is our Father's house of many mansions. Pantheism, which loses personality in universality, can give us, with all its transcendental and poetical ideas, no such satisfying conception and word as Father. Deism, with its "absentee God," seated on the outer circles of the heavens, unconcernedly watching the worlds go around, disappears before the thought of Fatherhood. There is no middle ground between Christ's revelation of Deity and atheism.

If Jehovah's better name is Father; if he has not bound himself, hand and foot, by "natural laws," making himself a prisoner in his own creation; if "law" is only the expression of the method of his activity, then prayer to him is both reasonable and filial, and the supernatural may express itself miraculously in the natural. That child must be dull indeed, or perverse, who never comes to his father for communion or request. Likewise, all theological schemes, such as those built up on the ideas of foreordination and predestination—"horrible decrees," which implicitly deny the instincts of fatherliness—vanish from the oppressed minds of men when they

think of God as the Eternal Goodness, and, knowing all his grace and truth, they hear Jesus say, "I and my Father are one." The "logic" of an abandoned Calvinism might be never so "sound." It contradicted the cardinal instincts and spontaneous impulses of the human heart, and men turned from Calvin to Christ.

It is seen that all Christian theology is wrapped up in that word "Father." The parable of the prodigal son is a whole "scheme of redemption." Hugh Price Hughes contended that the central figure in that parable is not the son, but the seeking father. The whole secret of man's salvation is in his return to God the Father. His relation as a son is not forfeited by his sin. "He arose and came to his father"—his father still. God's forgiveness is as unconstrained, simple, and pathetic as the father's in the parable.

By his life and death Christ manifested this love of God. He did not make it "possible for God to forgive," but declared his everlasting willingness to forgive.

Ye praise his justice; even such
His pitying love I deem.

He is "just to forgive." "The Father himself loveth you." "*God* so loved the world." The love of God was not a sequence to the sacrifice of Christ; it originated it. "He gave his only-begotten son." Christ said not only, "The Father is in me," but also, "I am in the Father." The Christ-nature, with all its humanness and pity, incarnated in Jesus, was eternal in the heart of God. Therefore no picture of the Crucified, smitten with sympathy for our sins and sorrows, placating and pleading before

“offended and outraged” Justice, can truthfully represent the relations of Father and Son. It is the Christus Consolator, who is forevermore in the bosom of the Father himself, who is our Advocate. It is only another way of expressing the everlasting compassion of God himself. It is the Christ-God who is our Judge. The “plan of salvation” is as simple as the sweet relationships of the home life, where a father finds nothing in his way to prevent his forgiving and restoring his repentant child. It is a vast pity that the Church has been so long encumbered with artificial programs of salvation, drawn up by political ecclesiastics, who formalized Christianity, from the procedure of the Roman law courts.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?

Who talks of scheme and plan?

The Lord is God! He needeth not

The poor device of man!

Jonathan Edwards’s famous sermon on “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” has been recently reissued and circulated in pamphlet form by a certain denominational publishing house. We are at a loss to understand the reason for putting such sentiments before this age, unless it be to excite universal repulsion. Doubtless Edwards was greatly stirred over the laxity and immoralities of his times, and perhaps there was much to justify his terrible presentations. He was also full of burning evangelistic zeal to save men from perdition. But such representations as those of his opening sentences only serve to shock us to-day, as when he says: “There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell but the mere pleasure of God.

By the mere pleasure of God I mean his sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation." "We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so it is easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that anything hangs by; thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell." There is no excuse to-day for even any apparent indorsement of such descriptions of the Father in heaven—the Eternal Goodness—as this: "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much in the same way as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath toward you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire." We must still preach the divine displeasure against sin and the judgments against iniquity; but it must not be in such repulsive phraseology and forms of thought as these. Let this sermon remain as a landmark of the past, something to be read as a piece of lurid literature; but let its representations of God be forgotten forever! Let us congratulate ourselves that we have a more glorious and winning doctrine to-day to proclaim. We are convinced that there is a most urgent necessity for preaching the great doctrines of Christianity with all the light that our latest and best thinking can throw upon them. And we bring with us an eminent witness to corroborate our contention—Dr. Henry van Dyke, preacher, poet, essayist, whose three addresses entitled "Joy and Power" many have had much satisfaction in reading. He does not believe at all in any such emasculated Christianity as would result should our faith be reduced to a mere ethical system, and should its

characteristic doctrines be eliminated or ignored. "You might as well propose," he says, "to fit a ship for service by taking out its compass and its charts and cutting off its rudder; make Christianity silent in regard to these great questions of spiritual existence, and you destroy its power to satisfy the heart."

This is well stated. The soul of man wants some truths of ideal and transcendental character that reach out into the unseen, and take hold of that which is beyond the veil. It demands the supernatural. Its thirst is for the living God. Its proper food is those great truths concerning the soul and its Creator; concerning sin and salvation; concerning repentance, forgiveness, atonement, duty, and immortality.

We believe with Dr. van Dyke that what the people want is not silence in our pulpits about the personality of God, the divinity of Christ, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the sovereignty of the heavenly Father, the truth of the divine revelation, the reality of the heavenly world. Such preachers as those who, out of an extreme fear of "doctrinal preaching," or led by the advice of some rather shallow church member who insists on what he calls "practical preaching," leave out from their pulpit themes such tremendous subjects, and feed their people on minute dissections of comparatively unimportant texts or the presentations of neat little dissertations on various moralities, we are convinced are making a fundamental mistake. They will soon come to the end of their pretty philosophizings and the stream of their thought will run in shallows.

Dr. van Dyke is right when he says: "What the

world wants and waits for to-day is a strong, true, vital preaching of doctrine. The Church must realize anew the precious value of the truths that Christ has given her. She must not conceal them or cast them away; she must bring them into the light, press them home upon the minds and hearts of men. She must simplify her statement of them so that men may understand what they mean. She must not be content with repeating them in the language of past centuries. She must translate them into the language of to-day. First-century texts will never wear out because they are inspired. But seventeenth-century sermons grow obsolete because they are not inspired. Texts from the Word of God, preaching in the words of living men—that is what we need.”

Such a statement explains excellently the ever-recurring need in each generation of what is called a “new theology,” and which is frequently looked upon with suspicion by those who cling to the old method of statement tenaciously. But it is not a new form of religion that is proposed, but precisely the same blessed old religion in a phraseology which shall make it understood by the people in the forms of thought and the style of speech then current. There is the same necessity that the twentieth century should have its new theology as there was that the eighteenth century, which found its want supplied in the preaching of John Wesley and his Methodist followers, should have a theology adapted to its particular needs.

In one sense the demand for “practical preaching” is a legitimate one. But the practice, the moral code, must flow out of the heart of some great

doctrine which is none other than a great practiceable truth of God, expressly revealed for the formulation and guidance of human lives. Our modern mind obeys a right impulse when it declines to listen to much speculation which leads nowhither—which has no possible application to conduct—which comes out nowhere close to the daily interests of men's business and bosoms. To quote Van Dyke once more: "We can afford to let the fine metaphysical distinctions of theology rest for awhile, and throw all our force on the central, fundamental truths which give steadiness and courage and cheer to the heart of man."

It was on these great underlying and everlasting primal verities of the soul and of all existence that Christ put the main emphasis. In obedience to these divine instincts, met in their gropings by the light of God's revelation, he would have all men find their perpetual happiness and peace. As long as in this world there are sin and sorrow, as long as the human heart has woe and life has passion and mystery, the voice of the preacher who can bring forth the majestic, solemn, and inspiring teachings to strengthen and console will have an ineffable sweetness for the ears of struggling and suffering men.

CHAPTER II

THE OPPOSING POWER OF SIN

ROBERT INGERSOLL used to declare that he did not believe in hell, but that he did believe in consequences. He imagined that he had contradicted the orthodox dogma, but he had simply stated over again what Christ said about the tree and its fruits, and what Saint Paul said in Galatians: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal." The only way of escaping evil consequences is to cease setting evil acts into operation, and to put forth only good thoughts and good deeds which shall have their proper consequences.

A recent writer, Orlando J. Smith, has written a very suggestive volume entitled "Balance." In it he shows that throughout the universe there is everywhere the law of equivalence working. Every cause must have an equivalent effect, every effect an adequate cause. Matter and force are indestructible and persistent. Effects follow causes in unbroken succession. To every action there is an *equal* and opposite reaction. When one form of energy disappears, its exact equivalent in another form always takes its place.

And the author clearly shows that not only in nature at large and as regards man physically does this law hold, but also for man on his moral and spir-

itual side. "Is there one law for physical interaction, and a different law, or no law, for intellectual and moral interaction? Does compensation exist for matter and force only, or does it exist also for the human soul?" "As the value of a machine or implement is shown in its working, and the value of a tree by its fruit, so the merit or demerit of food, drink, medicine, acts, and thoughts is determined by their results, reactions, or effects—by their consequences." We are unable to think of antecedents and consequences as being other than exact—of peaches as growing on apple trees, or of acorns that produce potatoes. The measure of truth and falsehood will be found in their equivalents—in their antecedents and consequences." "All things are to be had for the buying. The price of glory is to do something glorious. The price of shame is to do something shameful. Friendship, glory, honor, admiration, infamy, contempt, hatred are all in the market place for sale at a price. Even beauty is for sale. Beauty is not in the features alone; it is in the soul also."

"Each day," as Emerson said, "is a Day of Judgment." God is working through nature and the moral system of the universe in making up the great account, in settling with every man. "We see no books, observe no management, and yet the numberless settlements are made with as much exactness as if each one were superintended by a group of experts, combining more of knowledge and justice than are possessed by all of the mathematicians, scientists, thinkers, philosophers, and judges in the world." There is a Supreme Power which ordains this "principle of order, right, and justice which regulates the affairs of the world."

God is of a truth not mocked. *Whatsoever* a man soweth, that shall he *reap*. Every man will get just what he deserves—just what he has worked for.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.

This truth must be proclaimed with earnestness, emphasis, and reiteration from our pulpits. We are living in a time when it is popularly said that "hell is burned out." But the equivalents of the old-time fire and brimstone are here yet and will be forever. No one can offend the great laws of the universe and get off scot free. God is not so "easy." Everyone that in virtue is on his side shall, without fail, receive the reward of virtue in its consequences in holiness. Heaven and hell are absolute, eternal, inevitable. There is nothing local or temporary about the theology of the first psalm. Forever shall it be well with the righteous. Forever shall it be ill with the wicked. And no man can dodge results.

Men must be warned, and warned again and again with solemnity of these awful truths. He that sinneth wrongeth his own soul. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The mind of the flesh is death. The mind of the spirit is life and peace. Men living in carelessness and recklessness, scoffing at hell and penalty, going heedlessly on in a fancied but inane sense of security, must be arrested by the stern voice of the prophets of God, and made to pause and reflect on the inescapable issues of such courses.

And, every day, Christians must likewise ponder these laws well. They are universal, and apply to them as to all. Every minutest act—every "idle word"—must have its equivalent, its consequence.

There can be no cause without an effect. Every planting means a reaping. We live in a solemn and very real world which brooks no jesting or fooling.

Oscar Wilde, the poet, who died in 1900, spent his last years in an English prison for having committed unmentionable impurities. He left an autobiography which is tragic in its confessions. His words ought to sink deep into the soul of every man tempted to sin. He says: "If I must say to myself that I ruined myself, and that nobody, great or small, can be ruined except by his own hand, I am quite ready to say so. This pitiless indictment I bring without pity against myself. Terrible as was what the world did to me, what I did to myself was far more terrible still. I let myself be lured into long spells of scandals and sensual ease. I amused myself with being a dandy, a man of fashion. I surrounded myself with the smaller natures and the meaner minds. I became the spendthrift of my own genius, and to waste an eternal youth gave me a curious joy. Tired of being on the heights, I deliberately went to the depths in the search for new sensations. Desire at the end was a malady, or a madness, or both. I grew careless of the lives of others. I took pleasure where it pleased me and passed on."

He mourns thus over his mother's death, which occurred in the second year of his imprisonment: "No one knows how deeply I loved and honored her. Her death was terrible to me, but I, once a lord of language, have no words in which to express my anguish and my shame. She and my father had bequeathed me a name they had made noble and honored, not merely in literature, art, archæology, and science, but in the public history of my own

country—in its evolution as a nation. I had disgraced that name eternally, I had made it a low byword among low people. I had dragged it through the very mire. I had given it to brutes that they might make it brutal, and to fools that they might turn it into a synonym for folly.”

Who can read such a confession and revelation as that without feeling profoundly the vast significance of moral choices? Every soul must have its election days, when it must definitely express its will in regard to great moral and spiritual issues. The old alternative of God or Baal is forevermore presenting itself under every variety of modern form. Life and good are being constantly set over against death and evil, and come before us perpetually for our adjudication. Questions vaster in their eternal import than those of capital and labor, imperialism, currency, tariff, the control of trusts, are being decided daily by common men everywhere, but no one notes the profound meaning of these transactions. The minor choices of men as to their places of residence, their businesses, their political and social affiliations are not to be brought into comparison with those which touch the deepest interests of the spiritual life.

This power of choice, this endowment of solemn responsibility, is one of the profoundest mysteries which belong to humanity. It involves all the world-old inexplicable enigmas which center about man's free agency, the foreknowledge and foreordination of God, and the insoluble problem of evil. It negatives any purely fatalistic philosophy, any theology which at once puts man helplessly under the relentless grasp of necessity and divine compul-

sion, and then holds him accountable for his acts. It is the title deed for our greatness. Our choice must be our own. In every political campaign, after the speeches and letters of acceptance, the ratification meetings, the addresses of campaign orators, the distribution of literature, the appeals of the newspapers, the organization of clubs, the quiet activity of individuals—after all this, it is the voter who must decide for himself and by himself how he will cast his ballot. So men may try to influence their fellows; parents, by training, example, and precept, may seek to secure virtue in their children; pastors, by exhortation and private pleading, may endeavor to lead their brother men into ways of righteousness; friends, by loving companionship and sympathetic counsel, may attempt to exert a potent influence for good. But after all is said and done, in the final event, every man, despite all that God or men can do for him, is the determiner of his own destiny for weal or woe. No fact in the universe is fuller of more solemn responsibility than this. The starry heavens, the moral law, and man's responsibility—these have been declared to be the three things which should fill the mind with the greatest awe. For time and eternity we are sovereigns of our own fate.

In the body politic national elections fall on some specific day of the year and after an interval of years; in the spiritual realm they are ordered daily and hourly. The polls are always open. Determinations which may involve crises are as numerous as the calendared months. Mistakes may figure as fatalities. In governmental matters changes of administration may, indeed, have considerable weight

and far-reaching effects. But no such results can measure with the outcome of the count in the spirit's booth. At a presidential election a nation is the intensely interested participator and spectator. At the soul's election friends on earth and in heaven, the angels, Christ and God wait in prayerful hope and expectation. If the majority blunder at the nation's polls, many years may be required to rectify the resulting bad legislation. If the soul shall choose wrongly, it will travel many a mile of suffering and loss before its perilous mistake is remedied.

At the country's ballot boxes the voters drop secret ballots. They fall silently, but they are decisive. So secretly and silently does the soul record its preference for the good or the evil. There can be no split ticket—no division between God and mammon—in that voting. No citizen who ignominiously remains at home on election day can avoid his share of responsibility for what was then done. And no one can escape deciding by imagining that he will not decide the great questions of the soul and eternity. And we may be sure that every vote in the precinct of the soul's dominion will be counted. There is a self-registering contrivance for this purpose.

Sometimes men, under stress of conviction, feel that they must sever their old party ties, and go, with whatever sense of pain, into the new cause. Thus often does it cost the soul some agony to break up its old connections and choose the new path of truth; but that path leads to the House of Peace. And as, after the battle of the ballots, the country recovers from its perturbation and excitements and settles down into regularity, so, in conversion and

in all the critical judgments which the soul must make, after "the great transaction" is done there is an entering into a serenity which is like a benediction.

Everyone will be able to illustrate these truths out of his own experience. One of the writer's early acquaintances was a certain rich man who, in the political and social life of the community, exercised a rather wide influence which was distinctly pernicious. Of large physique, aggressive personality, sociable disposition, considerable wealth, a college graduate and an offhand, ready speaker, he had no small following in the town. He was an infidel with a library of anti-Christian books. Despite his liberal culture, it was his delight to deliver harangues to a collection of barroom loafers against Christianity and the churches. He owned the opera house of the place. We remember that once, at a concert given there by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, he entered and marched up to the front just as the company were singing, "O, you'd better believe the Bible!" and "O, you'd better be converted!" with many repetitions. A smile went through the audience. And yet it would, indeed, have been better for him had he believed the Bible and been converted. For he died a drunken sot, leaving to his wife, an estimable lady, and his children the memory of a dishonored name.

In the same town there was a prominent lawyer—a boon companion of the man just described—who had been educated for the ministry, but had turned his back on the call, gone into pot-house politics, and associated with scoffers at religion. One of his favorite jibes in public was that "religion was good

enough for women and children." Big, grown-up men, though, he asserted, wanted none of it. However, it would not have hurt him to have just a little. It might have saved him from dying from delirium tremens. Verily the results of choice are tragic beyond expression.

In the face of such incalculable consequences, one way or the other, what consummate folly is the affected policy of indifferentism as to religion! The attitude of Gallio, who "cared for none of these things" which were matters of such vital importance to Paul and the Jews, is one that characterizes too many people in this day. The momentous questions of religion are not conceived of as either urgent or very practical. An unconverted, strenuous business man will sometimes imply that such things are like the query as to whether the planets are inhabited or not. He is inclined to regard religion as a kind of luxury more than a necessity—a refinement, like poetry or music, introduced into life, and not a life itself. Religion, in his mind, means going to church and listening to sermons and choir music. "It's good enough," he says, "if a man has time and inclination for it. It's an accomplishment, and a very nice thing for people who care for it." As for him, he does not oppose nor doubt particularly. He simply lets it alone, as something with which he has no present concern. It has little or no relevancy to him, such as a matter of profits, or health, or the insurance of property might have. Consequently, as long as there are other pressing things to be attended to there is no call for immediate action about religion.

But the great problems of life and death are

not to be so easily disposed of. The claims of Christ cannot be so lightly brushed aside. Engrossment in business cannot excuse a man for forgetting his soul. The means of life must not overtop its ends. The great revelations of the Bible are not annulled because of men's inattention to them. Religion is not an accidental and omittable supplement to our existence, but the very first and indispensable essential of it. It is not a specialty, like a science or an art, but a universal necessity for all. Salvation and destiny are not to be contemplated in an attitude of half-amused curiosity. A recent writer, in a pamphlet on "Choosing" in religion, indicates the right mental condition: "The mind should be aroused, but not frantic with excitement. To be thoroughly awake, however, and prepared to take in the whole situation, with all its possibilities, whether of life or death, is to be in the most favorable condition for choosing wisely and for executing vigorously and with dispatch. Such choosing and executing, in relation to the soul's eternal interests, men can neglect only at their deadliest peril."

For every man shall come into judgment for the deeds done in his body. And that judgment is none the less executed by the immediate action of Divine Justice because it is automatic. In Jesus's parable of the judgment, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, we are not to literalize throne, sheep, goats, questions, responses, sentences, right hand and left. All processes of judgment are in the spirit and are automatic. Paul expresses it well when he says, "We must all be made manifest [Revised Version] before the judgment seat of Christ." What we essentially are will be clearly discerned and dis-

played by the inevitable contrast between ourselves and the perfect ideal. As we stand within the illumination which emanates from his peerless personality, all that we are, either in perfection or imperfection, will come out with startling vividness. No syllable may be actually spoken, but the soul shall hear within, clear and distinct, as the record of its own life frames itself into a voice for God, the "Come ye" or the "Depart ye." This revelation, which is also a pronouncement, is inevitable and inescapable. We *must* be made manifest. In every instant of time we are thus manifest. In the future it will not be different. Now and always our ideals and motives are brought into constant and necessary comparison with incarnated perfection. There is a moral imperative. We cannot run away from our own consciousness and inner self-confession. It would be as useless as foolish to call upon the rocks to cover us or the mountains to hide us from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne.

This judgment is a general one. It is as universal as it is necessary. It is for rich and poor, high and low, ruler and subjects. There are none exempt, nor can be. The pure white light of truth exposes all error, and all defaulting from absolute righteousness will be made visible as it is set beside that truth's perfect incarnation in Him who could say, "I am the truth." The Greek inscription on the temple at Delphos was "Know thyself." But we can know ourselves only as the Christ stands before us and, by his sinless purity and transcendent holiness, shows us what we are in comparison. All things then become naked and are laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, and to

ourselves also. For this incarnate Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart; and there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight.

This sort of judgment insures perfect equity. It looks not at this or that single act, but at the character as a whole—at the total personality in its registration of every thought, word, and act. And there will be perfect fairness. For in that character all the contributions of birth, education, environment, temperament will be evident. It will not be the bad only that will be discernible, but all the good that has been wrought out by prayer and struggle. And men shall be judged by the main intent and drift of their lives, either as selfish or unselfish, either as doing or not doing the loving deed unto the least of one of Christ's brethren. There will be no Draco to pass cruel or arbitrary judgments. The Judge is one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and has been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. If the real desire and striving of men have been to be like unto him, no matter what falling-off from actual realization there may be, he counts the will for the deed, faith for righteousness.

Christians should court, and not shun, this judgment by contrast with the standard in Christ. They cannot evade it if they would, but they ought not to want to escape it, but, rather, to welcome it. Whatever in them needs correction they should pray to be brought out into the light. Not in fear but in joy should they cry, "Thou, God, seest me!" For

God is no prison turnkey, but the Lover of our souls. Our prayer to him should be, "Search me and know my heart, try me and know my thought." He is no captious and meanly critical God. Christ does not set himself over us in lofty, supercilious pride of superior goodness, nor look with contempt and scorn upon our poor performance, if he knows we have actually tried to please him and be like him. He regards us with brotherliness and sympathy, and, when we fall, forgives and inspires us to renewed effort in his imitation.

And no one who knows himself a sinner, as he stands revealed to himself in the radiance of Christ's matchless whiteness, need feel despair. He might well ask how he shall stand in His sight before whom the heavens themselves are impure. But the judgment is not for condemnation but for salvation. The revelation of one's true self is the beginning of all reformation. "And when he came to himself . . ." Let the sinner, indeed, gaze at the Christ until the innermost secrets of his soul are revealed. He will then see how far he has departed from the normal and ideal. He will see his better self revealed in the Christ, and, instead of a Judge who will take advantage of his sorry plight to overwhelm him with shame and confusion, he will find One who comes seeking to save, reassure, cleanse, restore, purify, strengthen, uplift, ennoble. Let him, then, welcome each judgment of the Christ that he hears uttered in the depths of his heart.

But let him realize the fearful reality and the startling tragedy of sin, that he may be moved with an adequate contrition and voice his repentance in deepest sincerity. In some quarters there is found

to-day a tendency to minimize or altogether deny the fact of sin and its significance. A certain noted writer lately discoursed on the "Consciousness of Sin." He apparently does not lament the fact of the seeming decay of the consciousness of sin, and that so few sermons are preached at present on the sinfulness of the human heart. He contends that the decreased sense of sin does not indicate a general decline of religion, but that the conviction of individual responsibility and the quickening of conscience along the whole range of religious interests was never more manifest. He believes that much of the strenuous feeling concerning sin arose from a false dualism, which made God and the devil equal powers, and from the exaggerated emphasis laid upon Adam's transgression, as either inherited or imputed to the race. He holds that the old view was largely negative, and has been supplanted by an appeal to higher motives than the self-regarding fear of "the terrors of the law." The preference is given to the emphasis on positive good in every sphere of life. There is the "shifting of interest from the evils that are to be feared to the good that is to be worked for."

We may possibly recognize considerable philosophy in this analysis of the apparent decay of the consciousness of sin. Yet we would that the writer had expressed, in unmistakably strong language, abhorrence both for sins as definite evil acts and for sin as the state of the soul, the perverted condition of the being, from which they arise. And there will be many who will not agree with his interpretation of the life and teaching of Jesus upon this point when he says, "With the possible exception of his

not true! denunciation of the Pharisees, it does not appear that Jesus made any effort to induce a feeling of being guilty and lost."

It has, on the contrary, always seemed to thoughtful theologians that the Christ, who came preaching repentance of sin; who was the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world; who was himself, in his death, the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world; who promised the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin and judgment for sin, made of sin an awful and tremendous reality. He came not to condemn the world but to save the world. But to save it from what if not from its sin and consequent degradation and damnation? And there can be no salvation until there is the awakening of the mind to its true condition and its peril. There must be conviction, and a resolute turning away from wickedness to goodness. There is no unhealthy morbidness about the awakening penitent when he sings,

"Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve."

Jesus, by his searching words, his lofty ideals of duty, and the sinlessness and perfect holiness of his own life, awakens immediately, by inevitable contrast, the feeling of insufficiency, the sense of sin and shame in every heart. He "gives a spiritual edge to life's judgments and revives the voice of conscience within us." We are all thus "made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ." He tells us all things that ever we did. Therefore when any writer asserts that the religious instinct of mankind at large, as shown in the history of religion, gives

to the sense of sin no predominant place, we must take issue with him. To our mind, the whole struggle of the race, as shown in its religious systems, has been an effort to find some way of salvation from its sin and its consequent misery.

It has been remarked by many writers how little Emerson seemed to make of the fact of sin in the world, and what an element of fatal weakness this introduced into his philosophy. In certain other directions there is an attempt being made to eliminate sin from the catalogue of facts. The expositors of Christian Science argue that as darkness is only an absence of light, so sin is only an absence of goodness—a mere nonentity. Having flown in the face of fact and common sense by a denial of matter, of bodies, and pain, these false reasoners would thus easily get rid of the hideous sinfulness of the human soul by the short and easy process of simply denying its existence. Well does Washington Gladden reply to this sophistry in such sound and vigorous words as these: "By all the biblical philosophers sin is regarded as possessing the same relation to the moral character that death has to the physical organism. To say that sin is a nonentity—that there is no such thing—is to deny the most terrible fact within human knowledge. In truth, there is no evil in this universe but an evil will; but an evil will is just as much a reality as a good will is; and any theory which blurs this distinction or tries to put it out of sight is not merely ridiculous, it is pestiferous; there is palsy and perdition of the soul for those who dare to live by it." Indeed, no heresy could be more threatening to the spiritual part of man. And those mistaken people who assert their own sinlessness,

say that they are proof against temptation, and refuse longer to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," stand in the same awful danger.

By certain agnostic evolutionists also sin seems to be regarded simply as an imperfect state of development, and, hence, a normal stage in progress upward from bruteness. And pantheism, finding that which is called evil as well as good in the universe which it deifies, is bound to say that the one is as necessary and divine as the other.

A recent writer challenges the average man to review his life, and say if he "will not find that his dominant and deepest note, his daily habit of thought or life, his thousand-times-repeated characteristic has been, not a noble loving and choosing of the highest when he saw it, but some worldly 'lust of the eyes' or sensual 'lust of the flesh.' The man has known the better and has chosen and done the worst. The question with every soul must ever be, 'What will God say?' These solemn apprehensions, which arise in the mind of the man who perceives that he is a sinful man, come not from the thought of God as wicked and unjust and unholy, but, on the very contrary, from the thought of him as righteous and just and holy—in other words, from a true, not an untrue thought of what God is. . . . And, without the smallest morbidity or superstition, but only with moral sanity and seriousness, may it be asked, Wherewithal shall we, who cannot stand before our consciences, stand before the Searcher of hearts and not be overwhelmed? The question may be evaded, but it remains."

In the light of such considerations we are thoroughly convinced that there ought to be a more fre-

quent, fervent, and convincing preaching to-day of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." All sorts of sermons are preached nowadays. All "movements," reforms, causes, social creeds and projects, educational and civil theories, have themselves presented in the pulpit. About every Sunday in the year is pre-empted for some "day" or other. But, while we believe that it is absolutely essential that the minister be public-spirited, we are in accord with one who says that "his chief mission is to make men realize their accountability to God, and to bring them into right relations with God, and if he does not do this he misses the mark." It is easy to inflame an audience against the doctrines of anarchy, but perhaps many of the hearers are living, as far as God is concerned, in practical atheism and anarchy in their daily lives. We have not enough preaching to-day—loving but trenchant, kindly but incisive, coming to the erring individual with the sentence "Thou art the man"—upon the terrible fact of sin—not simply of sins, specific and definable, but of the underlying sinful disposition of the heart.

The writer to whom we referred above is right, and we quote his words with a strong indorsement of the need of speaking them now: "The value of all preaching and hearing depends upon a profound sense of personal responsibility. But appeals to the individual are being dropped. He is not called upon to repent of his own sins, but to join in a hazy, indefinite movement against the sins of the public. Preaching is shot into the air, aiming at nobody in particular, and at a little of everything in general. As a result, individuals are not convinced of sin, and the cry, 'What shall I do to be saved?' is not heard."

But frequently men take refuge from the indictments of the preacher and the accusations of a disturbed conscience by narcotizing their minds with some specious fatalistic philosophy, as if they were born with an ineradicable birthmark and fated inevitably to whatever sin their lives have brought forth. Many are acquainted with a tragedy in four acts—"Paola and Francesca"—a book which a few years ago stirred the literary world. It is the work of Mr. Stephen Phillips, a young English poet who gives the largest promise of genius, and who will undoubtedly make a world-famous name for himself before our century is very old. The poem must make a deep impression when acted, for it is as simple in its broad outlines and strong delineations of characters and situations as are the old Greek tragedies. But it is with the ethical bearings of the poem that we wish just now to deal. It illustrates the very sophistry with which we believe many are to-day deluding themselves as to sin.

Francesca, a young woman of remarkable beauty and grace, has just been wedded to Giovanni, the Tyrant, or military ruler, of Rimini. Paola is brother to Giovanni, much younger and handsomer than he, and passionately loved from youth by his older brother. It is he who brings the fair bride from Ravenna. From the moment they met Paola and Francesca were strongly attracted toward each other. It seemed to them as if they had known and loved each other from all eternity, and that their souls had intersphered in some previous state of existence. Giovanni innocently trusts Francesca largely to the watchcare of Paola. They both struggle against the guilty love. Paola seeks to flee

from it, endeavors to poison himself; but in vain. Francesca makes futile efforts to suppress her attachment. Such lines as these will show how inevitable their passion is represented to be:

Unwillingly he comes a-wooing; she
Unwillingly is wooed; yet shall they woo.
His kiss was on her lips ere she was born.

“Howe’er I sentineled my bosom, yet
That moment would arrive when instantly
Our souls would flash together in one flame.”

“And seems it strange that I should come, then?
No, it seems that it could not be otherwise.”

They appeared to themselves like Lancelot and Guinevere, who were drawn, with seemingly irresistible fascination, to each other. The mesh is woven more and more intricately and tightly. At last their passion has its consummation, and they succumb to sin, even though Francesca shudders and asks:

“Ah, Paola, if we
Should die to-night, then whither would our souls
Repair?”

And then she says:

“There is a region which priests tell of,
Where such as we are punished without end.”

But Paola flings this burning defiance at sin and fear and punishment, and vindicates their passion and guilt in these splendidly poetic but startling words:

“What can we fear, we two?
O God, thou seest us, thy creatures, bound
Together by that law which holds the stars
In palpitating cosmos passion-bright;
By which the very sun enthralls the earth,
And all the waves of the world faint to the moon.

Even by such attraction we two rush
 Together through the everlasting years.
 Us, then, whose only pain can be to part,
 How wilt thou punish? For what ecstasy
 Together to be blown about the globe!
 What rapture in perpetual fire to burn
 Together!—Where we are is endless fire.
 There centuries shall in a moment pass,
 And all the cycles in one hour elapse!
 Still, still together, even when faints thy sun,
 And past our souls thy stars like ashes fall,
 How wilt thou punish us who cannot part?"

The agonized husband and brother, Giovanni, loving them both passionately, recognizes that they have simply accomplished the inevitable, and also recognizes that there is no help for himself:

"No longer I postpone or fight this doom;
 I see that it must be, and I am grown
 The accomplice and the instrument of fate,
 A blade! a knife!—no more!"

He stabs them both together, and cries over their dead bodies:

"Not easily have we three come to this—
 We three who now are dead. Unwillingly
 They loved, unwillingly I slew them. Now
 I kiss them on the forehead quietly."

Such is the story; such the tragedy. It is powerful and dramatic. But the lesson it teaches, if taken out of poetry into life, would be one of subtle and terrible danger. There are too many people now who, instead of struggling bravely against temptation, succumb, after a little, under the plea that they absolutely cannot help themselves—that a destiny not of their making compels their action—a preordained fate overrules and masters them. Criminals are generally fatalists, and seek at once to quiet

their own consciences and palliate their offenses before the world by alleging that their will was not free—that they were overborne by a force not themselves.

There are many who, if not fatalists by professed philosophy, still put such an exaggerated emphasis upon heredity and temperament, environment and circumstance, that, practically, they excuse defecation in themselves and others, and make themselves the puppets of an inscrutable predestination and a blind Power that drives them on without their choice or acquiescence. Against such a perilous doctrine it is the duty of all preachers to raise their warning. By such deceptive reasoning the will is paralyzed in advance. It will grow in strength and effectiveness only as it is trusted and used. The human will may be, indeed, comparatively weak, and temptation may be very strong; but a wavering will may be fortified by coming into union with the divine will. The forces of heredity and environment may seem to overwhelm man's free agency so that he cries out in despair, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" He feels that it is vain for the leopard to change his spots. What he is, what he does, he was created to be and do, and there is no help in him. But this is to ignore the grace and strength which comes from Christ—the help which prayer will bring. He who is most beset by temptation, and in whose blood may flow the fiery passions and the sinful lusts of many generations of ancestors, can still rejoice that he is more than conqueror through our Lord Jesus Christ; that when he is weak, then is he strong; that he has overcome the world through the blood of the Lamb; that he can

thank God that deliverance has come by Him who is mighty to save and who can save to the uttermost.

Mr. Phillips, in another remarkable poem, "The Sin of David," again shows two guilty lovers seeking to exculpate themselves in their sinfulness. The woman says to the man:

"For thee alone came I into this world,
For thee this very hair grew glorious,
My eyes are of this color for thy sake.
This moment is a deep inheriting,
And as the solemn coming to a kingdom."

And he replies:

"Apart, we two did wander inland; now
Listen, the ocean of infinity!
Life hath no more in it!"

Here, once more have we the antagonism of a fatalism which clearly negatives the gospel. A recent reviewer of Maxim Gorky, the Russian revolutionist, thus summarizes some of the teachings of his novels: "Fate is compounded of the trivial; it is constructed of the nothings of the day. The destiny of each soul is present each moment, is whole and undivided each moment; it is the kernel of each act. Given such an environment and I must shake hands in just the fashion that I do. Occupation, avocation, is Fate. The petty lie I just told is Fate. The noble deed I just did is Fate. We never triumph over environment; we may triumph over *an* environment, but another instantly closes in on us. The soul of the race creates a prison-house and the individual is locked in for life. . . . We imagine ourselves free, but the soul's activities are but limitations acting from the other side. . . . Time is a thing of shreds and patches—and we are the shreds and patches. Things are not made or unmade. They are. Every-

thing is cut-and-dried in that noiseless workshop—the unconscious.” Men and women are baubles of destiny; they slumped in the making.

Thomas Hardy, in “*Tess of the D’Urbervilles*,” gave the world an utterly depressing, though powerfully written book, which proceeded along the line of this paralyzing thought. The heroine has her adverse destiny decided for her throughout by the most trivial incidents. Her ruin is accomplished by force and guile, and the author tauntingly asks where was the special Providence that ought to have protected her in that hour. She is sent to the gallows for a murder to which she was remorselessly driven, and the author biting remarks that the “President of the Immortals” had at last come to the end of all the miseries he could inflict on Tess.

Against such a pessimistic, suffocating, crushing, hope-annihilating philosophy of despair, bondage, and living death, normal humanity, in its sanity, in the name of a freedom conscious of itself and of ineradicable and inevitable moral judgments otherwise impossible, lifts up its persistent and enduring protest. Writers and thinkers like Gorky and Hardy represent not the healthy, undiseased thinking of men at their best. They rather belong to abnormal types of imaginations, sick, awry, poisoned at the very roots.

It is in opposition to all such miserable perversions of truth that Christianity proclaims its gospel of the human freedom and accountability of all men; of virtue or vice as the result of unforced choice; of reward and punishment—heaven or hell—within the unfated determination of everyone; of the validity of the testimony of conscience as to innocence

or guilt; of happiness or misery, the result of unconstrained acts; of the efficacy of repentance and pardon to reverse evil courses; of redeeming power in the pity and love of God and Christ, saving the wickedest "unto the uttermost," and proving that, where sin abounds, grace much more abounds.

It is this hopefulness of Jesus—this "glad tidings of great joy" for every man, however circumstanced, environed, or hard bestead—which has put a new face on the universe. It has transformed into courageousness, manly effort, and expectancy of triumph all that "disgust and secret loathing" of existence, making human life a hell, which Matthew Arnold says "fell on that hard Roman world," with all its "deep weariness and sated lust." Let us praise God now and always for the optimism, the cheer, the glorious prophecies of ultimate victory which Jesus gives us. "In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world!" Men can do all things through Christ, who strengthens them. More is He who is with them than all who can be against them. By hope they are saved. In all things they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them. They can be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. To them that overcome shall be given to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

It is not very singular that some young bandits and murderers, captured some years ago near Chicago, should coarsely reiterate their ignorant creed of "No God for us," and "When a man dies that's the end of him." They had made themselves like the brutes that perish, as far as feeling goes, and infinitely worse morally, and it is not to be wondered

at that one of them should argue in this wise: "I simply can't believe in an after life. I can't see the reason in it. When we're dead we're dead, just the same as animals. They don't go to any heaven or hell, do they? Why should we?"

And if a man has thoroughly animalized and bestialized himself, this is good reasoning. If there is to be any true persuasion of the truth of immortality, there must be the endeavor after it—if, by any means, one may "attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Eternal life is in the spirit—a conscious knowledge of God "and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent"—and immortality must be lived for; one must begin the immortal life here; its essence is in its high and holy quality and not simply in its futurity or its everlastingness. When one does not live for it he cannot believe in it. The most convincing argument to any man against future existence is a bad life in himself. Naturally he will seek to find comfort in the thought that death ends all, rather than that it brings inevitable penalties for evil deeds. Nevertheless, although they may talk loudly and assume a shocking braggadocio, there is evidence that criminals, despite their profession of fatalism, atheism, and materialism, cannot entirely dismiss from their minds "the dread of something after death"—

What dreams may come

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil!

—which their misdeeds call up within them.

In even the most obdurate and callous, remorse cannot be altogether absent. Its voice will make itself heard and summon sinners beforehand unto judgment. Instinctively there is an echo in the heart

to the announcement that Death makes in the morality play of "Everyman," when he speaks to the gay young pleasure-taker:

On thee thou must take a long journey,
Therefore thy Book of Account with thee thou bring,
For turn again thou canst not by no way;
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning;
For before God thou shalt answer and show
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few;
How thou didst spend thy life, and in what wise,
Before the chief Lord of Paradise.

Another aspect of the result of wrong living and criminality comes out in the answer of one of the youthful murderers just mentioned to the question whether he felt no regret for the murders he committed: "I can't feel so bad about it. When people are dead they're dead. When I drop it's the end of me." Here we see how all pity and the ordinary instincts of humanity die out in a man's heart when he denies the doctrine of immortality and accountability for sin. If he is a beast, and all other men are beasts, then it is little matter what is done, justly or unjustly, sympathetically or cruelly. Death wipes out the score, good or bad, and that's the end of it all.

It is said that the mother of one of these murderers had been working with charitable organizations for years, devoting much time to organizing boys' clubs, the purpose of which was to keep lads from saloons, and from smoking, and reading improper literature. The boy criminal himself said that his mother was "as good a Christian as ever lived," and the sympathy of all fellow Christians went out to her in her grief. There is much to heredity, much in environment and education, and, usually, the child of pious

parents, who has been carefully reared in a Christian home amid good surroundings, and who has the benefit of the best schools, turns out well. But such is the perversity of our human nature, such the fatal possibilities of individual choice, that even a boy so trained may deliberately turn to wicked ways, destroy himself, disgrace his home, and break the hearts of his parents. A good man may, as Ezekiel long ago observed, "beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood"; but "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," "neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Every man must bear his own burden. In a deeper sense than is usually thought, he is the "architect of his own fortune."

Again we repeat our conviction that what our age needs most urgently is to have the tragedy of sin shown it from the pulpit. The sentences of the gospel need to be translated into the language of to-day, and the persistence of hell needs to be enforced until apathetic consciences shall awaken from dormancy and look in repentance to the Christ who saves both from sin and the hell which sin creates. This word "the persistence of hell," which we have used above, is the title of a sermon preached by that scholar and fine Christian gentleman among the liberals, the Rev. John White Chadwick, and printed where evangelical and orthodox Christians would scarcely expect to find it—in a Unitarian religious journal. After reading his delineation of the consequences of evil thoughts and actions, it seems to us that, as regards this doctrine, the Unitarians and the Evangelicals are not far apart. Dr. Chad-

wick quotes from the Unitarian Channing: "Can he [the gospel minister] read of that fire that is never quenched, of that worm which never dies, and yet see without emotion fellow beings with whom he sustains the tenderest connections, hastening forward to this indescribable ruin?"

Dr. Chadwick then proceeds to show the ethical and spiritual results of sin in the heart—the hell within and the punishment within—in terms similar to those which are heard from our orthodox pulpits of to-day. He repudiates mushiness in the presentation of essential facts—the overemphasis on the love of God and the dream of forgiveness by which the laws of moral retribution are obscured. The Father is no "Infinite Complacency." As there is a right and healthy fear of earthly parents' displeasure, blame, grief, disappointment, and punishment—a fear profitable to the boy or girl; as there is in men the wholesome fear of social disesteem, the rebuke, by life or word, of noble friends, and the legitimate fear of the law with its penalties, so there may be a reasonable fear of God. Indeed, these earthly fears may be a part of the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom or goodness.

Then there is the fear of the inestimable losses which make part of the inventory of hell's horrors; "the unmitigable stamp a brutish vice may brand upon the body or the face"; "that entanglement in which every secret wickedness involves the doer soon or late"; the "being what we hate, missing those beatitudes which have been pledged to us." Wicked men become aware that they have miserably squandered life's golden opportunity, and an accusing memory dims the luster of bright, immortal

years which might have been. They fear meeting those in the future whose generous expectations they have not fulfilled. They fear the revelation of themselves as souls in hideous nakedness.

And there is more than this: "The hell of physical penalty, with its abounding misery and degradation and defeat," which "burns for those who sin against the body's temperance and purity." "There is many a face which is now hateful and repellent which might have been beautiful and attractive but for some secret shame, some tolerated fault, some fatal tendency of thought and will, some fond adultery of the heart." Sensuous and sensual vices, greed, vanity, pride, all stamp their image and superscription upon soul and countenance alike. "Such is the unity of soul and body that it may well be doubted whether there is any moral aberration which does not register itself upon the physical man, not his face only, but his whole organism. Yet the physical penalty is but the smallest part of the penalty." . . . "Besides that, there is the public shame, apart from any formal arraignment, the consciousness of pitying or averted eyes, the visible grief and shame of precious friends, the dread of sinking to some lower deep, the sense of inward banishment from the society of the good and true, whom still the weak and erring often reverence in their inmost hearts." . . . "For every sensual fault there is a hell of correlated shame and sin. The secret fault escapes the social penalties that wait on discovered vice or crime only to plunge into a vortex of temptations to new forms of guilt." These secret faults are "mothers of lies, of insincerity, of dishonesty, of faithlessness."

The punishment is often indescribably awful. "Once let a man depart from the right way, and there seems to be some terrible fatality by which, at every turn, he is reminded of his fault. He walks a hall of mirrors which flash back to him his new misshapenness on every side. Things that are peace and blessedness to other men are grief and pain to him." "The most dreadful punishment of sin is not anything that comes upon us from without, but to fall short of the high calling of our possibility, to be so little when we might be so much." . . . "It is hell enough to be a brute when one might be a hero, to be a hinderer of social good when one might help so much, to destroy or depress men's faith in God or man when we might exalt it so gloriously."

Such are some of the searching sentences we have culled from this noble sermon. Are we not right in saying that the presentment of these truths—the hideousness of sin and of its natural consequences—is too much neglected in our pulpits to-day? Would that all our evangelical ministers could portray as masterfully the penalties of the hell that sin itself builds as does this Unitarian! Would that the Unitarian preachers might proclaim as powerfully and persuasively as do their evangelical brothers the atoning grace of Christ, by which men may be saved from the hell of vice to the heaven of holiness!

CHAPTER III

TRANSFORMING POWER EXPERIENCED

EDWARD EVERETT HALE, in an address on John Wesley, quoted a part of that old chorus that we remember, in our boyhood days, being sung and repeated without limit in the old-time revival meetings:

I'm glad salvation's free!
Salvation's free, for you and me,
I'm glad salvation's free!

That sentiment gave gladness to the gospel message from the first. That message was that the feast was spread, "enough for each, enough for all, enough for evermore"; there was no favoritism with God—he was no respecter of persons; none were shut out or left to the cold comfort of any uncovenanted mercies; whosoever would might take the water of life freely—there were no privileged classes under this gospel; there was no elect "upper ten," and no non-elect "lower ten thousand"; redemption on the same terms was offered to all men, high and low, respectable and disreputable; it was a free gift, and, consequently, not to be had by any purchase price of penance, any offer of a round of duties punctiliously performed; it was of grace, and not of works.

'Tis heaven alone that is given away;

'Tis only God may be had for the asking.

After the long reign of a caste system in theology and religion, after the nightmare of "reprobation"

which had oppressed thousands, it is little wonder that this proclamation filled the multitudes with an exuberant new joy and an exultant hope. As with the primitive Christianity of Jesus, it became a social revolution as well as an evangel; for it penetrated masses of sodden humanity with life and light and happiness and peace. And to those to-day—the “submerged tenth,” despairing in our great cities, and the millions of low-caste, no-caste, or outcast wretches of India, and the coolies of China, and the fellahs of Egypt—the triumphantly sung proclamation, “Salvation’s free, for you and me,” will waken a heart under the very ribs of death. May the echoes of that glorious song never die out!

Readers of Booth Tarkington’s entertaining story, “The Conquest of Canaan,” will recall the touching scene at the deathbed of a local character—a crotchety old “debater” by the name of Eskew Arp. Joe Loudon, the hero of the story, had once been discovered by Arp acting as the “barker” for the shows at some distant fair grounds, and yelling constantly, “Positively no free seats!” The phrase got to be a joke between them; so that when Arp lay dying, he laid his hand on Joe’s and said, faintly: “You always—always had the—the best of that joke between us. Do you—you suppose they charge admission—up there? Do you suppose you’ve got to show your good deeds to get in? I hope—I do hope—they’ll have some free seats. It’s a mighty poor show—we’ll—all have—if they—don’t!”

And old Eskew Arp was right. “By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory.” And this freely bestowed grace of

an all-merciful, all magnanimous God has been working its transformations from the day of Pentecost down through the centuries and its astounding marvels are in evidence in our own day.

We were greatly affected recently on reading again the testimony of Jerry McAuley as to the effect of his first acquaintance with the Bible, when he was shut up in his prison cell as a criminal. He speaks of the long dismal hours of Sunday, after the prisoners, coming from the morning service, had been marched back to their cells, and had to spend the rest of the day in solitude. Generally Jerry had contrived to have a novel on hand, but that day he was without one. Every prison cell was supplied with a Bible, but he had never touched his since he had laid it away long ago in the ventilator. He knew that there was such a book, and that people pretended that it was a message from God, but he had never cared for it, nor read a word in it.

That Sunday he had heard the converted Orville Gardner, or "Awful" Gardner, as he was called, a man who had been his confederate in sin, make an impassioned appeal to the prisoners to give their hearts to God. Gardner had also prayed for them, sobbing and crying like a child. He had quoted one sentence, which he said was from the Bible, a sentence which impressed Jerry. He tells us what happened when he went back to his cell: "I took the Bible down, beat the dust from it, and opened it, but where to turn to find the words I wanted I knew not. There was nothing to do but to begin at the beginning and read until I came to them. On and on I read; how interested I grew; it seemed better than any novel I had ever read, and I could scarcely leave

it to go to sleep. I got so fascinated that from that day it became my greatest delight. I was glad when I was released from work that I might get hold of my Bible, and night after night, when daylight was gone, I sat up by my grated door to read by the dim light which came from the corridor. I had supposed it to be a dry, dead thing—a book only fit for priests and saints—but now, whenever I could get a chance to communicate with my mates in the workshop, I told them it was a splendid thing, that Bible.”

It seems to us that if others besides Jerry could bring some fresh interest and enthusiasm to bear upon the reading of the Book, they would discover, as did he, how absorbing and controlling is its interest, and how it is anything but arid and stupid literature.

Jerry's account of his conversion is wonderfully graphic. He went through a terrific struggle for days and weeks. He says: “The struggle did not seem to be all mine. It seemed as if God was fighting the devil for me. To every thought that came up there came a verse of the Scriptures. I fell on my knees, and was so ashamed that I jumped up again. I fell on my knees again and cried out for help, and then, as ashamed as before, did I rise again. This conflict went on for three or four weeks. It was fearful. I wonder now at the long-suffering mercy of my God. I wonder now that the Holy Spirit was not grieved to depart from me forever; but at last the Lord sent softness and tenderness into my soul, and I shed many tears. Then I cried unto the Lord and began to read the Bible on my knees. I prayed and then I stopped, and prayed again, and stopped again, but still I continued kneel-

ing; my knees were rooted to those cold stones of my cell. My eyes were closed and my hands tightly clasped, and I determined to stay so until morning, until I was called to my work; 'and then,' I said to myself, 'if I get no relief, I will never, never pray again.' I felt that I might die, but did not care for that. All at once it seemed as if something supernatural was in my room. I was afraid to open my eyes. I was in an agony; the sweat rolled off my face in great drops. But how I longed for God's mercy. Just then, in the height of my distress; it seemed as if a hand were laid on my head, and these words came to me: 'My son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven.' I do not know if I heard a voice, but the words were distinctly spoken to my soul. O, the precious Christ! How plainly I saw him lifted up on the cross for my sins! I paced up and down my cell. A heavenly light seemed to fill it, and a sweetness of perfume like the fragrance of sweetest flowers. I did not know if I were living or not. I clapped my hands and shouted, 'Praise God! Praise God!' "

Thus entered into the kingdom of grace and forgiveness this most wretched man: depraved, debauched, a prize fighter, a drunkard, a gambler, a highwayman, a dreaded river-thief, a companion of the lowest and vilest of men and women. After his conversion he was overcome by temptation again and again, but recovered himself each time, and at last became strong enough to stand without falling. The world knows of his work for the outcasts of New York city in the Water Street Mission and Cremorne Mission, where hundreds of the wrecks of humanity were brought into a saved condition. At

his funeral thousands upon thousands gathered to do him homage. Streets were blocked with mourners. If a great general or statesman had departed, there could not have been more genuine sorrow, or a larger concourse, or more eloquent tributes to his character and the value of his life-work.

The Rev. Dr. S. Irenæus Prime, speaking of the conversion of Jerry McAuley and many others like him, says: "If this work is not of God, it is nothing, worse than nothing. It is an awful farce. For me it is a divine reality. It was no fanaticism that in the days of the apostles led men to cry out, 'What must I do to be saved?' And when I have sat in the midst of publicans and harlots, drunkards, thieves, and other vile and wretched human beings, down so low in misery and shame that no human arm was long enough to reach them, or strong enough to raise and save them; when I have heard them in broken accents, amid sobs and tears, tell what the cross of Christ has done for them—how it has brought husbands and wives together in peace and comfort with happy children around them, after liquor and crime and want had broken up the household; when I have heard scores and scores of such testimonies, ascribing all their salvation to Him who lived for them and died for them, lost and ruined by sin, tears have run down like rivers of water from my eyes, and I have prayed that hundreds and thousands of preachers of righteousness like Jerry McAuley might be taken from prison, to go in the name of Jesus, and seek and save them that are lost."

Again and again we return to read such books to reassure our faith. Nothing so convinces us of the supernatural power of conversion; nothing shows us

so wonderfully the power of God unto salvation as proclaimed in the gospel; nothing so displays the unfathomable love and grace and the marvelous transforming power of Jesus Christ as do these thrilling narratives, which find their direct way to our innermost soul.

In common with many others, the writer once visited the Water Street Mission in New York city, which Jerry McAuley founded, and the vivid impression made upon him by the testimonies heard there will ever abide. Each man that spoke—and there were many of evident culture—gave definitely the exact period since his conversion. “It was one year, six months, two weeks, and three days ago,” one would say, “that I found Christ.” Many testified positively to the absolute destruction in them, through the power of grace, of the appetite for strong drink. Every one who spoke had been delivered from a life of fearful debauchery.

Many doubtless have read with deep emotion the book by Samuel H. Hadley, entitled “Down in Water Street.” Unless one has his heart encased in Portland cement, he will be strangely moved by this volume. Nothing in fiction can be more tragic, realistic, moving, than these pages torn from human hearts. Here, in rapid, strong outlines, are given the sketches of McAuley and his wife, Hadley and his brother, “The Old Colonel,” “Rummy,” “Old Pap Lloyd,” John Jaeger, the anarchist, Billy Kelly, “Bowery Ike,” “Old Uncle Rube,” and a score more.

It is not surprising that the text “For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost,” should mean much down in that mission. Hadley

himself had been a drunkard, a gambler, a forger; but he became a marvelously successful worker among the dregs of humanity. His brother, Colonel Hadley, saved through his influence from a life wrecked by drink, was singularly successful in rescue missions, in Saint Bartholomew's, in the Church Army, in the Christian Abstainers' Union.

Besides these, there are the life records of a large number of miserable outcasts, transformed from beastliness to saintliness: women taken out of lives of horrible shame and unutterable vileness and repulsiveness—as was “Delia, the Bluebird of Mulberry Bend”—and made into self-respecting, Christian women of untold influence for good; and of men who were sots, bums, victims of delirium tremens, tramps, beggars, crooks, thieves, gamblers, blasphemers, toughs, bunco-steerers, wife-beaters, bar-keepers, opium fiends, ex-convicts, and criminals, but who had been gloriously redeemed and restored to purity, manhood, and nobility. They would come to the mission sometimes for weeks, “beating their way,” “playing Hadley” for bed and board (which he well knew), “working that graft for all it was worth,” pretending to get converted regularly. But he bore with them lovingly, never letting them know he suspected them, until, at last, in very shame, their manhood would be touched, they would call upon Christ in earnest, and be soundly converted. Even then, when they would fall again and again, he was patient with them, until at last they got upon their feet permanently. They would come to the altar half drunk, incredibly dirty, clothed with nothing but vermin-infested rags, with no shirts—nothing but coat and trousers—with matted hair and beard,

crazy for lack of sleep, hungry, and raving. But, like the maniac living in the tombs, whom Jesus instantly healed, they were soon clothed and in their right minds. The transformation, as shown in their contrasted photographs, "before and after," is simply astonishing. Surely, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation.

They have little of the philosophy of religion down in Water Street, and they are not troubled with agnosticism or higher criticism. This is the language that you hear there: "I came in drunk, and I went out sober, and the best of it is I've been sober ever since. Whatever prayer it was I made that night I don't remember; but the Lord heard it, and the best of it is, he has answered it ever since." . . . "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." . . . "Blessed Jesus, these poor sinners have got themselves into a bad hole. Won't you help them out? Speak to them, Lord, do." . . . "Dear Saviour, I was a drunkard down in Cherry Street fourteen years ago, and you saved me. Save these poor drunkards." . . . "Dear Jesus, you know you have saved me; now I want you to fill me so with love and yourself that I'll never, never fall; never, never; you can do it, Jesus, if you want to, and I'll stay here until you do." . . . And every night there is heard the cry of rejoicing: "I've found Jesus! O bless the Lord, I've found Jesus."

It is not wonderful that such a verse as this was a favorite with Mr. Hadley:

The worst unto my supper press,
Monsters of daring wickedness,
Tell them my grace for all is free;
They cannot be too bad for me;

or that he should assert his creed in these words: "We believe our blessed Redeemer can beat the devil out of sight at his own game and on his own ground; nor do we think he needs any sociality or subterfuge to help him; only the straight, glorious gospel of love, compassion, and pity." Mr. Hadley used to plead eloquently for the harlot and the drunkard at the same time that he anathematized the drink traffic which is working all that awful ruin. He believed thoroughly in the saving power of inexhaustible and unwearied love for men, and would despair of none.

Many have read the powerfully written sketch by Norman Duncan called "The Regenerate." It describes, in the victim's own words, the descent that a man of intelligence and culture made, through drink, to absolutely the lowest depths of degradation and suffering. But one night he found himself in a mission, listening to the testimony of men who had been saved from just such abject misery as he was in. We will let him tell the rest:

"What they had become I could see with my own eyes. They were clean, they had no rags, they had no thirst. They were men of joy to themselves, of value to the world, and they had no consciousness of guilt; they had peace. And I—I was still a drunken outcast, a sinner in rags, dirty, drunk, shirtless, ill. But they had been what I was. They had not lied when they said so. There was hope, then, for me. You see, these men were the living evidence of that hope.

"Some one asked me if I would not give God a chance in my life. He was a clean, strong, kindly man, who had been what I was and whom I knew to have been what I was. You know him. Did I not

care to give God a chance to restore me? Would I not try it? Would I not be prayed for? Would I not pray for myself? I was drunk, still drunk, but I was resolved. I was down and out. I had nothing left. And I went forward to get what these men had, what my soul desired—redemption—and I did not care how I got it. It was a logical determination. The evidence of God's activity in the world, of his power and wish to regenerate, had been so convincingly exhibited that no rational intelligence could endure to doubt it. And I was in a position to know the depths from which these men had been lifted. And I knew that only the power and love of Almighty God could so lift them up.

“And I got up from my knees a new man, ‘a new creature in Christ Jesus.’ I had been ‘born again.’ It is not a cant phrase. There are no other words so accurately to describe the change which had occurred within me, no other words to describe the completeness of it, the newness of the life into which I had come, a child in righteous ways. I was regenerate, I had been ‘born again.’ I was sober, and from that moment I have never wanted alcohol. I have not wanted a drink. I have not wanted a drink since that moment. I did want a bath instantly, but I was too dirty to be given one without precautions. And I wanted a clean shirt. I loathed my rags. I wanted to be clean. My word, how I craved a bath! And pride revived at once, the good pride of manhood. One of the brothers (we redeemed drunkards are all brothers) offered me five cents. I rejected it. I was no beggar. I was a man again, a gentleman. What did I want of charity? What did I want of a nickel I hadn't earned? I wanted work. First of

all, I wanted sleep. I desperately needed a bed, and then I wanted a bath and a job. I had my bath in the morning. My word, what a gracious gift it was! And I got my job, too, and I got my clean shirt.

“But I lay that night in a Bowery lodging house. It was a heaven of rest and ease and quiet and seclusion after Solomon’s cellar. I was too dirty to be put in the long room with the decent Bowery rowdies and drunks. I was given a bunk in a section reserved for the very worst of us. I had fallen very low, you see. But I was too weak to crawl into bed; they must lift me in. I did not sleep. I lay awake all that night in tears and prayers and joyous aspirations. My tears were of contrition, my prayers of rejoicing, of gratitude; my aspiration was toward work and service and self-respect, and the love of all men. A wonderful night, a night in which those things I had once cherished, but had long abandoned, were restored to me—hope, truth, love, pure ambition.”

But it is not only in the Salvation Army barracks that the twice-born are found. The same work of blessed regeneration is to be found elsewhere. We take an illustration from the Methodist Times, of London, a description of human wrecks reclaimed in Central Mission (Wesleyan) of Manchester, England.

Here is a man who was converted at thirty-two, and as he tells the story he exclaims repeatedly that it is amazing, marvelous, miraculous. He cannot get over the wonder of it all. He was born in a cellar in the lowest part of the lowest slums. His first impressions are of shameless immoralities. While yet a child he was familiar with all that is vicious

and unclean. His parents sinned hard, drank heavily, and quarreled frequently. They died before he had reached his teens, and as a lad he was flung upon the streets to find his living and fight his way. He lived in lodging houses, tramped the country, and managed to escape the vigilance of the police. Race meetings regulated his course, and for years he never missed a race that he could reach by fair means or otherwise. He gave up all pretense to work. He picked up his living without. A policeman, stating a case against him, described him as a "hardened scamp." Later, drink became his sole interest and passion, and he scarcely ever went to bed sober. His parents and all his brothers died of drink. In a fit of delirium tremens he went to the canal to drown himself. As he recovered, his despair was terrible. One night he found himself in the mission. He has no idea how he got there. He had never heard of the place, and was "quite out of his latitude." He has not the slightest idea of what happened. He was very drunk, but he staggered to the place for the present called home with a pledge in his hand. It was there when he awoke next morning, and he made up his mind he would try hard to keep it. By noon he had torn it up and begun to drink. That day, Mr. Alcock hunted him out and invited him to the services.

Next Sunday night he went to the Free Trade Hall. To hide his shabby clothes he crept down the side to a corner. Mr. Collier preached, and this man says he has never preached as he did that night. He preached about a Saviour that could and would save the very worst; and the man who had been gripped of the Spirit says, "He looked straight at me and

said, 'Man, Jesus can save you.''' The man addressed "fair jumped." He stayed to the after meeting, and again Mr. Alcock was at hand. In the inquiry room he prayed and trusted as the evangelist led him. It was all so strange. The effects of drink still clouded his mind. For weeks he had a terrible battle. As the "blues" wore off, the cravings for drink increased. Sickness seized him. His mates said he was dying. His wife became alarmed and entreated him to drink. Through it all he refused to budge. Mr. Collier had said Jesus would save him, and he would. "I may die," he replied to their appeals, "but I will die sober." Deliverance came. He announced that he was "under new management."

As he looks back over the years what impresses him as the most wonderful thing about his wonderful conversion is what he calls its "immediateness." Tendencies inborn and habits ingrained lost their power in a moment. More strange than the deliverance from drink was the change in habits of thought and speech. He had lived all his life among the vilest, and his language was of the foulest. It was the speech in which he had been taught to talk. He used it unconsciously as of second nature, but from the moment he rose from his knees "saved by grace" not one blasphemous or indelicate word has passed his lips.

What shall we say to such marvelous changes in human character as we have recorded? Can any human psychology, new or old, explain them? any "action of the will under strong stress of emotion"? No; nothing, we confidently affirm, but the miraculous, supernatural power exerted by Jesus Christ

can account for such revolutions and reformations and re-creations. No other religion, no form of ethical culture, can show anything like it. Saint Paul, in his day, knew how those who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, sensualists, thieves, covetous, drunkards, extortioners, had been washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God. No matter how noble, Christianity is no scheme of ethics simply, as some would have us believe to-day. It is the power of God unto salvation, a putting forth of spiritual, dynamic energy, and Christ can save to the uttermost, even saving poor sots and ignoramuses who call on his name in hope, and faith, and agony, when they know no theology at all, and little, if anything, of him.

The volume known in England as "Broken Earth-enware," and in America as "Twice Born Men," by Harold Begbie, is deservedly having a very extensive sale. He calls it "a clinic in regeneration—studies in the phenomena of conversion from the standpoint of the student of human nature." Mr. Begbie is evidently an ardent admirer of the late Professor William James, of Harvard University, to whom he dedicates this volume. Professor James's book, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," seems to have furnished him the incentive for these social-religious investigations, and he modestly says that his own book is useful only as a footnote to the better known treatise of Professor James's.

The volume is written with great skill, the narrative flowing with ease and charm, and never failing to hold the attention with its dramatic vividness and climaxes. The series of chapters are in the most

realistic sense "human documents." Mr. Begbie's researches were carried on in one narrow portion of the most hopelessly degraded of London's population, sunken to the bottom in poverty, ignorance, degradation, vice, and crime. Among these wretched, loathsome, and seemingly irredeemable men and women the Salvation Army is carrying on its redemptive work. The sketches which the author gives us are of the transformations, effected by conversion through the Army's instrumentality, in the lives of these sin-cursed miserales: life-long, sodden drunkards, never sober; brutal, cowardly, ferocious beasts, who half murder their wives and children; confirmed thieves, highwaymen, assaulters of police, jail birds having served sentence after sentence; prize fighters, rowdies, bullies, tramps, and loafers; rum-sellers, lascivious pimps and panders, fornicators, corrupters of youth; the lowest of the low, the vilest of the vile, steeped in criminality, descending to every depth of privation, shame, and infamy, losing all self-respect and semblance of humanity; homeless, workless, clad in vermin-infested rags, stealing their food, sleeping in holes and dens—such are the specimens that are presented to us in this volume.

It cannot be said that such books are pleasant reading. But there is a fearful fascination in them in the awful tragedies which they depict. And in the chronicles of instantaneous conversion—conversions which remain steadfast—which bring about an intense reaction against and disgust for the former life, and in the complete and revolutionary redemption to righteous living of such wretches as the writer depicts with his pen, there must be matter of

supremest joy for every Christian heart. Case after case is reported of the immediate transformation of most abandoned sinners—past all human help, it would be said—who, kneeling at the penitent form and crying aloud for mercy, even when in drink, have immediately been converted into happy, sober, self-respecting, virtuous, industrious, law-abiding, religious men, with a zeal to go out as missionaries for the salvation of others as low-down outcasts as they themselves had been. The narrative makes one's heart glow with gratitude and praise for a Saviour who can "save to the uttermost." The proofs of Christianity's power to "make the foulest clean," to bring "life and health and peace" to the most hardened and debased sinners, to make "mournful, broken hearts rejoice," are not confined to Pentecost or the first century, but are here and now and in the midst of us.

We have heard some preachers who objected to the phrase "twice-born," insisting that every man when first born is born a child of God; that the divine life, even during a career of evil, is still present in the soul, though dormant; and that in conversion it manifests and asserts itself, but that there is no altogether new creation. Practically, however, it makes little difference in what theological light we may regard the manifestation of that birth "from above" which Jesus insisted upon to Nicodemus. The important thing is the *fact* of conversion and its incontrovertible validity.

As one reads these terrible tales of degradation, pollution, and sufferings, it is borne in upon him how supremely important is the problem and duty of child-saving. It is a glorious mystery and an

infinite mercy that the most contaminated and debauched can be saved. But the effort of the Church and of society and of the State ought to be to prevent, as far as possible, such unspeakable degradation of human lives. It can be done if the work is begun with the children before they sink in the mire.

It is a vastly praiseworthy devotion too, in the Salvation Army and every other evangelical agency, to be rescuing, as brands from the burning, these wrecks of lives in the reeking tenements. But, if the largest service would be rendered, the slums, with all their foulness, disease, and immoralities, must be wiped out. They are a blot on our civilization. There can be no decent living for thousands as long as they are permitted to survive.

Furthermore, while we glory in the fact that even the most debased prodigal may be restored and made over by the mercy of God and the grace of Christ, the conviction becomes all the more intense, as we read these lurid portrayals, that it is better, infinitely better, never to have gone the prodigal's way. And we have no sympathy with the characterization of those who all their lives have kept the even tenor of their ways in righteousness and the service of God, as experiencing only a traditional, tame, uneventful, unexciting, conventional, or second-hand religion. Theirs is the best path to follow; their knowledge of Christ, by daily companionship through the years, the deepest.

Even when converted, if susceptibility and sensitiveness remain, it would seem that in those monsters redeemed, the memories of their past would be an almost ineffaceable horror and a haunting nightmare. How, even for the purpose of saving

others by their story, they can bear to repeat the terrible narrative night after night, one can hardly imagine. There is a constant temptation, likewise, which must be resisted, to glory in past deeds of pre-eminent and daring wickedness, and to grow callous to their enormity by frequency of repetition.

Sometimes we have thought that writers on the phenomena of conversion have seemed to imply that the "new psychology" explained everything, and that there was nothing necessarily supernatural about the wondrous change, that "emotional states" rather than the power of God furnished the key to the transformation. We are glad that Mr. Begbie forcibly contends against all such superficial interpretations. He says most convincingly: "Whatever conversion may be, whatever its physical machinery, it is religion, and only religion, which can put the machinery in motion and make a bad man a good man, a profitless and dangerous citizen a useful member of society. . . . However science may explain the psychological side of conversion, however convincingly it may show us that religion is a clumsy term for describing emotional excitement, science itself cannot and does not save the lost and rescue the abandoned. Science cannot do this; it knows how it is done, and yet cannot itself do the thing which it assures us is not a miracle; and science does not do it, does not desire to do it, for the very reason that it lacks the religious impulse which alone can accomplish the miracle not only of converting people but of making conversion of the evil and the bad a passion of the life of the good and the virtuous."

CHAPTER IV

THE MYSTERY OF THE POWER

WE do not care to bring ourselves into open contention with some of the professors in our colleges who lecture on social psychology or the psychology of religion. But we are convinced that much that they say must tend to depreciate religion in the minds of the students. Whenever they want striking examples of abnormal suggestibility, hysteria, hypnotic phenomena, the magnetism of big assemblies, the loss of individuality in the mass, the manifestations of uncontrolled emotionalism; the instability, credulity, irrationality, and non-morality of the crowd; mob feeling, panicky states, crazes, epidemics, manias, crankisms, sensationalisms, frenzies, they are too apt to select revivals for their illustrations. Of course the stock quotation is the famous Kentucky revival of 1799-1800, when intense excitement prevailed among a frontier population unaccustomed to reserve. As the historian tells us: "The floor was covered with the spiritually slain. The heart swelled, the nerves gave way, the hands and feet grew cold, and motionless and speechless they fell to the ground. Some lay still as death. Some passed through frightful twitchings of face and limb. Some beat the floor with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony, bounded about. The 'jerks' began in the head and spread rapidly to the feet." There was, besides, "the barking exercise" and "the holy laugh."

All this is familiar to us. We have no wish to defend such hysterics further than to say that it was not all hysterics, but that out of even such revivals as those, mighty moral and religious results were realized which were permanent, and affected for good the whole Middle and farther West. But such manifestations were a passing episode. The revivals of to-day are characterized by no such exaggerated excitements, but are orderly, rational, thoughtful, marked by reflection and the appeal to intelligence and conscience, as well as to the feelings. We contend that the college psychologists ought to make their distinctions more clearly, and ought to discriminate. One would think, from reading their pages, that all revivals were crazes incited by overstrained emotionalism and the mesmerism induced by the crowd.

In a recent volume on psychology we caught such phrases as these: "Bystanding scoffers have been drawn into a revival maelstrom." "A mob is a formation that takes time; the revivalist expects little response during his first half-hour." . . . "Let us ask what, according to this law, will happen to possibly suggestible persons who submit themselves to certain well-known revival practices? Let us suppose that the notion of a striking transformation has been held before the subject's mind for days, weeks, or even years; let us suppose that the subject has finally been induced to go to the penitent form; here, we will suppose, prayers full of sympathy and emotional earnestness are offered for him, and that everything has been so arranged as to produce a climax in which he will finally believe that the connection between himself and God is now accom-

plished. The leader says to him: 'Do you now believe? Then you are saved.' Is it not evident that this whole process favors the production of a profound emotional transformation directly through suggestion?" "The reaction from a purely emotional religious revival often leaves the cause of real religion worse off than it was at first. This, perhaps, is why experienced churches, like the Roman Catholic, have no use for revivals."

These quotations are not from any irresponsible sources, but from two of the most distinguished psychologists in our country. Now, we are not calling in question the accuracy of the psychological interpretation of the "purely emotional" revival. Neither do we seriously object when we find "religious crazes" catalogued with "waves of emotional feeling," "passionate sympathetic strikes," "political landslides," "cholera scares," "popular delusions," "migration manias," "booms," "panics," "agitations and insurrections," and other examples of popular hysteria, for without doubt there have been genuine religious crazes bearing every aspect of fanaticism and dementia. Consequently, we do not indict our professors when we find them including "frenzied religious revivals" with Millerism, "holy-rolling," table-tipping séances, speculations, war fevers, and so on. But what we do object to is that the legitimate and rightly conducted revival is left to be confused with all of this extravagance and rarely brought out of the background.

We fear also that the psychology of conversion is stated in such cold-blooded and critical fashion as to make it seem something entirely and satisfactorily explicable by the laws of suggestibility and the

mesmeric influence of a crowd worked into a highly emotional state. The converted man is studied somewhat as if he were a freak. His actions and language under intense feeling are labeled and tabulated for the psychological museum. Analyzing and dissecting in this laboratory fashion, the psychologist would seem to discover nothing which at all resembled any supernatural agency. Conversion would seem to be an entirely natural process—or, rather, most unnatural—with the Holy Spirit nowhere in evidence. A recent university professor in Chicago is reported as saying in a lecture on “The Development of Personal Religious Experience”: “In no respect is there greater agreement among the psychologists of religion than that the methods of revivals are essentially methods of hypnotism. The fixing of attention, the manipulation of the subjects through a series of suggestions, the final mandatory exhortation to surrender and to indicate it by a simple motor response—all these are familiar methods of hypnotism.”

The psychologist can study the phenomena leading up to conversion and the subsequent phenomena after conversion. These he may explain, perhaps quite clearly, under well-understood laws. But when he comes to consider the central fact of conversion itself, it seems to us that he meets a mystery that baffles all human explanation. It is perhaps difficult to separate the human and divine element in revivals and conversions. It may well be that the supernatural works in and through the natural, but certainly the supernatural cannot be eliminated *in toto*, and any consistent Christian theology be retained. One author speaks of “the revival meeting, where

religious excitement is in the air, and a premium is put on feverish feeling." "The spirit of the crowd dominates the individual, the powerful influence of unconscious imitation gets control of him, and he yields his old will and his old ideas to a mysterious social force which compels obedience." But the writer is fair enough to add: "To say this, however, is by no means necessarily to condemn revivals. Whether or not it is desirable that the spirit of the crowd should dominate the spirit of the individual will depend on the nature of the two spirits. . . . Revivals often work for righteousness and result in unmistakable and lasting good."

Some instances may justify this author in saying, "Many a man is led by the excitement of the 'inquiry room' and the 'mourners' bench' to say and do things of which he was afterward ashamed; and when the intense feeling state of the revival meeting burns itself out he not merely 'backslides' but becomes hardened, suspicious, cynical toward all religion, and the last state of that man is worse than the first." But it would be a great mistake to generalize too broadly from such unfortunate instances.

Likewise, we think that this professor in a leading Christian college is erring on the side of too great conservatism and caution when he writes: "Just because of its marvelous power when once started in motion, a revival is a most dangerous engine, and is so easily and so frequently misused and turned from the safe track that one should hesitate long before trying to 'get one up.' If at times it is powerful for good, it is often equally powerful for evil; and one can never be sure that, once started, it will not rouse the lion and the hydra in man, and

drag religion down into something approaching a wild orgy of frenzied savages."

Let us, indeed, beware of wildfire, but let us not fear to use every rightful means of promoting sane and spiritual revivals.

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, the famous Labrador missionary, once thus spoke before Harvard students:

"I think the trouble with many of us is that we think that by much learning we shall find out God! We think that we shall get sure of the premises on which to base our relationship to Jesus Christ by the study of books and the hearing of lectures! Christ said, 'If you are willing to do, you shall know.' His Spirit will still animate our hearts and lives and dwell within us if we are willing. To me it is a question of whether we are willing to follow the Christ, whether we are willing to pay the price of following the Christ or not.

"But I say Christ does do for men to-day what he promised to do, and what these accounts tell us he did do. He took then a fisherman who was ignorant and unlearned, who lied before a handmaid and ran away from a handful of soldiers, and made that man into the Peter that the world has ever since honored. And he does it again now. If, as a surgeon, I stood before you to-day and advocated a remedy that nineteen hundred years ago made great cures, and you were to say, 'Well, I don't see that it ever does it now,' and I were not able to point to any such results now, I should appear to be either a knave or a fool. What sane man would spend his time in advocating that which had not for centuries fulfilled its promises in the benefits it claimed to be able to perform?

“All I can reiterate as I stand here is that I am sure that to make our lives worth while we must be filled with faith: that I have seen myself over and over again; just as I have seen the temperature fall and life restored as some course of treatment benefits a dying man, so have I seen the cruel man made kind and the drunken man made sober, and the impure man made pure, and the feeble man made strong, and the coward made brave. By union with Christ I have seen men making these tiny homes in Whitechapel and on the Labrador coast that were little better than hells on earth into places where God’s love dwelled, where men gave as well as took, where poverty did not make the world look half so blue as riches often do, where tender and fearful people were enabled to meet crises in life, before which to-day many of us would fail. I have seen this faith make men strong and women tender, giving them in these prosaic days the power to be true and self-forgetful, just as in that long list recorded in Hebrews men were made pure and powerful and unselfish and successful by faith.”

So many in our churches have come to Christ in easy ways, without the struggle which poor wretches of the slums and in other lowly walks of life have known, that they are either ignorant or skeptical about this wondrous power of Jesus’s name. It would do us all good to join with the Water Street converts in singing:

“O, it is wonderful,
Strange and so wonderful,
Jesus could save even me!”

In a conversation with a noted superintendent of city missions he told us of an experience while he

was at the head of city missions in Cincinnati. The gospel wagon was out with its preachers and singers, and, after the exhortation, in one of the worst sections of the city, the invitation to come to Christ for salvation was given. One man who, just before, had been shot out of a most disreputable dive, drunk, demoralized, unutterably degraded, was attracted by the singing and the crowd. He followed the evangelists to a service in a nearby Methodist church, where, after a long struggle and much prayer, he was gloriously converted. Then he wanted the preacher, a deaconess, and some of the accompanying friends to go with him to his home. His home was a wretched, dirty, dilapidated room or two in a squalid tenement. The man had been notorious for his terrible brutality toward his wife and children, beating them unmercifully when in his drunken orgies. When he pushed the door open, revealing an apartment utterly bare of all comforts, and even necessities—carpets, chairs, tables, all lacking—there was a hurried flight within, and the terror-stricken wife and children were seen huddled and cowering in a further doorway. The husband, now thoroughly sobered, called to her: "Mary, don't run away from me; I won't hurt you, Mary—never, any more! Come to me, Mary. I'm a changed man. I'm converted, Mary. I ain't going to drink any more. I ain't goin' to be bad to you any more. I'm a converted man, Mary!"

At first his wife looked at him suspiciously; then she glanced at the minister, the deaconess, and the friends; then gradually she gathered confidence, and, slowly approaching him, gazed steadfastly into his eyes, placed her hands on his shoulders, put her

arms about his neck, kissed him, and wept. Everybody wept with her.

The man kept his pledge. His whole life was altered. He set up his little saddler's shop. He moved out of the foul tenement, away from the wretched city block into a country village, where he lived a cleanly and reputable life.

We are hearing, as we have said in the previous chapter, much in these days about the "psychology of conversion," but can any psychology whatever adequately explain such transformations as these? It is vain to tell us about the magnetism of a crowd, about the laws of "auto-suggestion," and all that. Books like James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" and the volumes of Starbuck and Coe are very interesting, but they deal only with the external phenomena of conversion and not with its underlying causation.

And if, in regard to this new birth, this birth anew or "from above," we ask with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" the only answer that can be given is that it is one with the great mysteries of the universe, similar in operation to vast cosmic forces whose action and effect we can see, but the inner source and secret of whose dynamic energy we cannot fathom, since we are irresistibly led back and back through all intermediate processes to God himself, the Fountain Head and Reservoir of all power in the universe and in the soul of man.

It is true that this power often works without demonstration, like a seed growing in the dark, or like the permeating leaven, as well as in the startling, cyclonic changes such as shake a man's being to the center and make him over as by an earth-

quake shock. It operates normally in the lives of little children and of adolescents, and, as Dr. Terry has suggested, presumably in the prenatal period also—a constant, silent, gracious force of inspiration and sanctification. It is through such action of this good and loving Power, able and willing to help us and all creatures, and to guide us wisely, without detriment to our freedom; this Loving Kindness which continually surrounds us, in which we live and have our real being, and which is the mainspring of life and joy and beauty, that we have come into the blessed experience of this infinite grace of God which sustains and enriches all worlds.

But it is well for us sometimes to see how this grace manifests itself in the sudden, cataclysmic changing of a life thoroughly depraved and actively sinful into a life of purity and religious consecration. The cries, struggles, tragic doubts and fears, and the overpowering and ecstatic emotions of such natures are all strange to many of us. The elder brother of the prodigal could not put himself in the prodigal's place. At a certain midweek prayer service which we regularly attended, the chaplain of the Seaman's Bethel frequently brought up with him to the meeting a dozen or more brawny sailors from the lake boats. The testimonies of these men, rescued generally from lives of drunkenness and vice—moving testimonies, given with pathos and manly vigor and positiveness and exultation over what the Lord had done for their souls—would electrify all from their respectable dullness into life and feeling and rejoicing.

This is the old-time gospel which, in any revival season and the whole year round, must be preached.

No new legislation that the nation or States or cities can originate and pass will cure the desperate malady of sin. Our faith stands not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. That power can take a man like Paul—"sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating"—a blasphemer, persecutor, injurious, and renovate him through and through into sainthood. It is the boast of science that it ignores no fact in the universe, and here is one of the greatest facts in the history of mankind that cannot be overlooked or treated slightly. This is the fact of a new creation, the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Manifestly the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. This Power, effecting new dispositions in men, shows the "greater works" of which Jesus spoke; for, more than healing physical disease, more than raising the dead is this birth "of the spirit," this divine act of procreation, this unique efficiency in Christ, this miracle of miracles which overcomes habit and reconstructs existence, and which is the consolation of all the sinful, the inspiration of the Church, the hope of a world lying in wickedness.

The Rev. Dr. W. E. Hatcher has told us in a very graphic way the story of the conversion of John Jasper, the noted Negro preacher and philosopher of Richmond, Virginia. Jasper's life was that of a consistent, deeply devout Christian, and his influence with the people of his race was unbounded. The narrative gives the account of his conversion while yet a slave in Jasper's own words:

"I was seekin' God six long weeks, jes' 'cause I

was sich a fool I couldn't see de way. De Lord struck me fus' on Cap'tal Squar', an' I left thar badly crippled. One July mornin' somethin' happen'd. I was a tobarker-stemmer—dat is, I took de tobarker leaf, an' tor'd de stem out, an' dey won't no one in dat fac'ry could beat me at dat work. But dat mornin' de stems wouldn't come out to save me, an' I tor'd up tobarker by de poun' an' flung it under de table. Fac' is, bruhr'n, de darkness of death was in my soul dat mornin'. My sins was piled on me like mount'ns. My feet was sinkin' down to de rejuns of despair, an' I felt dat of all sinners I was de wust. I tho't dat I would die right den, an' wid what I s'posed was my lars bref, I flung up to heav'n a cry for mercy. 'Fore I know'd it, de light broke; I was light as a feather; my feet was on de mount'n; salvation rol'd like a flood through my soul, an' I felt as if I could knock off de fac'ry roof wid my shouts. But I sez to myse'f I guine to hol' still tell dinner, an' so I cried, an' laffed, an' tore tobarker. Presently I looked up de table, an' dar was an ol' man—he lub me, an' tried hard to lead me out de darkness, an' I slip roun' to whar he was, an' I sez in his ear as low as I could, 'Hallelujah; my soul's been redeemed!' "

Then he tells us how he had to raise his first "shout to de glory" of his Redeemer, how "de fust tastes of salvation got de better of" him and brought the overseer in anger to quiet him. But he goes on:

"Mars' Sam was a good man; he was a Baptes' an' one of de head men of de old Fus' Church down here, an' I was glad when I hear Mars' Sam say he want to see me. When I get in his orfes, he say: 'John, what was de matter out dar jes' now?' an'

his voice was sof' like, an' it seemed to have a little song in it which played into my soul like an angel's harp. I sez to him: 'Mars' Sam, ever since de fo'rth of July I ben cryin' af'er de Lord—six long weeks—an' jes' now, out dar at de table, God tuk my sins away, an' set my feet on a rock. I didn't mean to make no noise, Mars' Sam, but 'fore I know'd it, de fires broke out in my soul, an' I jes' let go one shout to de glory of my Saviour.'

"Mars' Sam was sittin' wid his eyes a little down to de flo', an' wid a pritty quiver in his voice, he says, very slow: 'John, I b'leve dat way myse'f. I lub de Saviour dat you've jes' found, an' I wan' to tell you dat I do'n complain 'cause you made de noise jes' now as you did.'

"Den Mars' Sam did er thing dat nearly made me drop to de flo'. He got out of his chair, an' walk over to me an' give me his han', an' he say: 'John, I wish you mighty well. Your Saviour is mine, an' we're bruthers in de Lord.' When he say dat, I turn 'round an' put my arm agin de wall, an' held my mouf to keep from shoutin'.

"'John,' says Mars' Sam, 'you needn't work no mo' to-day. I give you holiday. Aft'r you get through tellin' it here at de fac'ry, go up to de house an' tell your folks; go roun' to your neighbors an' tell them; go anywhere you wan' to, an' tell de good news.'

"Farewell, my old marster; when I lan' in de heav'ly city I'll call at your mansion dat de Lord had ready for you when you got dar, an' I'll say: 'Mars' Sam, I done what you tol' me, an' many of 'em is comin' up here wid da' robes washed in de blood of de Lam'.' "

Mr. Frank T. Bullen has given us a remarkable book entitled "With Christ at Sea"—an autobiographical narrative of the personal experience of the author in trying to lead a Christian life on a large number of ships and among the common sailors. Being converted himself, he labors for others, and here is the prayer for one of his shipmates: "Dear Father, here's poor Willie Ballantyne brought face to face with you at last. You've done it yourself, and no one but himself can prevent him from being set free. I needn't ask you to save him, you've done all that; but I do ask you to make him see that it is so. Loving Lord, you've been pleading with him for a long time; make him give up struggling against you; make him as happy as you make everybody who gives himself right up to you. And we'll bless you and praise you with all our hearts, with all the new words and powers you've given us. Amen."

His account of what followed we give in his own words: "I had no sooner finished speaking than Ballantyne broke in: 'Lord Jesus Christ, I ken you've sauvit me. I canna feel't; ma heid's all dizzy like; but I'm believin' wut ye've said about nut ca'asting oot ony puir wretch 'at comes t'ye. A'am's bad's can be, a drucken, swearin', feckless loun; there is na onything tae be said fur ma 'at's guid. But ah ken fine' 'at ye love me, fur all ahm sae bad. Here ah aam, tak ma, an' make something oot o' ma, fur ah've made an awfu' mess o' mysel'. Amen.' "

The author then tells what happened next: "Then, springing to his feet, he kissed me, while I hardly knew whether I was in the body or out of it. All I

knew and realized most profoundly was that He who came to do the will of his Father was doing it now, and no one else had any hand in the wonderful work at all."

Again, another of his mates, a gigantic Norwegian, who had been a drunken, swearing, brutal terror, is converted. We have seen like cases in the sailors of Seamen's Bethels, and know it can be done. Jem, in praying, subsequently, for another, said: "Dear Fader Gott, you know I haf been so bat, zo fery bat. I haf been blag lige pitch. I tink bat, speak bat, do bat, all day, efery day. Unt den you make me know you lofe me; you make me see mine-selluf yoost as I vas, but I benn afrait. But now I know, Glory to Gott! I know the blag sin is gone; I am all nice unt vite inside, unt I don't afrait any more."

Afterward Jem spoke in a public religious meeting in this style, and a more forcible, pointed, and effective style has never been employed by any doctor of divinity:

"Dear Vrients: You hav ask me to tell you vat de Lort haf done for me. How can I dis do? Ven I tink of his gootness unt lofe, I hav not vorts efen in mine own langridge to speak of it; how den can I tell you in Englisch, vich I only talk like any oder sailor-man? But yet I not can say no. I vas a teufel—I dink vorse, because de teufels dey haf no hope, und I haf shut my soul up from hope myselluf. If dere is anything bad I can do, I haf do it. I haf hate de dear Vater Gott, I haf hate all his peoples. O, is dere anyting bad I haf not do? I vill say not any more aboud my sins, pecause I haf much shame for dem, unt yet I feel dat if I talk 'bout dem, I vill

tink mooch of myselluf pecause I haf been so bad. Unt more, I vas so misbul. I nefer haf no peace, I nefer haf no res', I nefer haf no pleasure, 'cept I ked tronk unt fight, unt dat cos' all de money I vork so hardt for. Den I come to Port Chalmers unt I go into de meetin', unt I hear a man say dat de Lordt Jesus Christ is come to tell man vat Gott is; dat Gott ton'd hate me, an' not vant me to die unt go to hell; dat hell ain'd vatin' for me, but Gott waits alvus, unt dat he ben sorry dat I vas not happy. He tell me dat der is only von man can send me to hell, unt dat is me myselluf, unt dat if I come unt ket into his hants der ain't no von—no, not efen de Sattan himselluf dat can pull me 'vay agen.

“Unt vile I lissen unt hear effery vort, believing id's all true—'pout some pody elles—I hear a vort in here [striking his breast] dellin' me, 'Yes, Yem, you ben de man all dis for.' Unt I don't vait anoder minit. I belief id. I say: 'Yes, Lord Yesus, I ben de man you die fur. Unt now I ben coin' to gif myselluf all oop fur you.' Unt, if any man say to me any more, 'How do you know all dis?' I say to him, 'How I know? Vat you tink id is keep me frum svearin', frum bein' bucko, frum keddin' tronk, frum hatin' myselluf unt eferypody ellas? You ton't know? Vell, I do. Id ben de Lort Gott Almighty. Nopotty ellas can do it.' Unt now I vas yoost like a leedle shild. I haf lose de taste for de bad, unt find it for de goot, t'ank Gott. Unt if I, dot vas so bad, unt ton't know anyting 't all, get holt of dis goot ting, who in de vorlt coin' to be left oud? Gott bless eferypody, for Yesus Christ's sake, Amen.”

The author's own comment is the best that can

be made: "The broken, halting words ceased, but their effect upon the audience was marvelously manifested. Talk about the effects of oratory, the power, with magic words allied to the music of the human voice, to sway multitudes of people as the wind sways the corn. Wonderful the gift! But here was a man hardly able to speak the language of his hearers, ignorant of all elocutionary rules, of any tricks of rhetoric, who had so gripped the hearts of his audience that they wept, almost writhed, under the fierce stress of their emotions, and as he descended from the platform the meeting broke up, for all present wanted to press his hand. And I, who dread intensely all forms of spasmodic emotional religion, mere play of feeling influenced by externals and evanescent as the ripple upon water when the wind dies away, was so profoundly moved that I was glad to get away into a corner and simmer down."

After a period of long strain, and feeling the need of some mental relaxation, we took up one day Charles Reade's story of "Peg Woffington." In the concluding pages of the book the author narrates how this fascinating and celebrated actress of the eighteenth century, who had entertained London for years by her beauty, versatility, and dramatic genius, turned at once from her profession and a life of waywardness wherein she had known sin and transgression. She was in Dublin and went into a small chapel. She had lived in a "day of sapless theology, ere John Wesley waked the snoring Church." But in this plain little building she came on something of a different kind which the novelist thus describes: "Instead of sending a dry clatter of

morality about their ears, or evaporating the Bible in the thin generalities of the pulpit, this man drove God's truths home to the hearts of men and women. In his hands the divine virtues were thunderbolts, not swan's down. With good sense, plain speaking, and a heart yearning for the souls of his brethren and his sisters, he stormed the bosoms of many; and this afternoon, as he reasoned like Paul of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, sinners trembled—and Margaret Woffington was of those who trembled."

Very beautiful, too, it seems to us, is the narrative of her progress in the divine life: "After this day she came ever to the narrow street where shone this house of God; and still new light burst upon her heart and conscience. Here she learned why she was unhappy; here she learned how alone she could be happy; here she learned to know herself; and, the moment she knew herself, she abhorred herself and repented in dust and ashes. This strong and straightforward character made no attempt to reconcile two things that an average Christian would have continued to reconcile. Her interest fell in a moment before her new sense of right. She flung her profession from her like a poisoned weed."

The novelist quotes her letter to a young female friend, contemplating the profession of an actress. This is what she wrote to the girl: "At the bottom of my heart I always loved and honored virtue. Yet the tendencies of the stage so completely overcame my good sentiments that I was for years a worthless woman. It is a situation of uncommon and incessant temptation. Ask yourself, my child, whether there is nothing else you can do but this. It is, I think,

our duty and our wisdom to fly temptation whenever we can, as it is to resist it when we cannot escape it."

The converted actress gave herself up to works of piety and love. Her life was cut short by disease. But "she lived long enough to read a firm recantation of her former self, to show to the world a great repentance, and to leave upon indelible record one more proof of what alone is true wisdom, and where alone true joys are to be found."

We do not remember reading anything like this in any of our present-day fiction. Most of the writers, except those who are professedly religious, either ignore religion completely or seem to be ashamed of mentioning it. For this reason we have quoted at such length this passage from Charles Reade, and must give one more extract, which depicts the change from a stormy, passionate career to one wherein "she had the peace of God which passes all understanding." Here is the beautiful pen picture: "Reader, it was with her as it is with many an autumn day: clouds darken the sun, rain and wind sweep over all until day declines. But then comes one heavenly hour when all things seem spent. There is no more wind, no more rain. The great sun comes forth—not fiery bright, indeed, but full of tranquil glory—and warms the sky with ruby waves, and the hearts of men with hope, as, parting with us for a little space, he glides slowly and peacefully to rest. So fared it with this humble, penitent, and now happy Christian. . . . When the great summons came it found her full of hope and peace and joy; sojourning, not dwelling upon earth; far from dust and din and vice; the Bible in her hand,

the cross in her heart; quiet, amid grass and flowers and charitable deeds."

We could go on and multiply such instances of transformation from every station in life. It must not be supposed that we do not prefer the regular, orderly development from childhood up of a religious life to the experience of the prodigal and his dramatic return. But that experience is a reality and something to be reckoned with. The conversion of such is a problem for philosophy. Personally we have never read any adequate explanation of it on any purely naturalistic grounds. Emotionalism is only one of its accessories and not its essence. In many cases emotion would seem to have been almost absent, the great change being effected while the mind was in a stolid state through drink. It is not sufficient to remark on the many who fall away. To lapse into vice is the dreadful possibility of any man, however virtuous. The old fatalistic dogma of "once in grace, always in grace" has been abandoned. If men of reputation and helpful surroundings go downward, can we wonder that these brands plucked from the burning, with heritage and environment against them, should sometimes or frequently relapse? But no consideration of these lapses is an answer to the mystery involved in the cases of those who do stand in virtue and true holiness through all their after lives. How shall we explain their transformations? We confess ourselves unable to offer any explanation which does not involve the immediate, direct, new-creating power of God in Christ. If philosophy and psychology find no mystery, and are able to offer a complete analysis, how is it that psychology and philosophy by themselves have never

been able to effect any results so humane and grand, results that in every way of thinking must be most thankfully received and rejoiced over fervently? Why is it that these results seem to be confined to the Christian religion and to the evangelical forms of that religion?

As one contemplates this marvelous, miraculous, regenerating, and transforming power of Christ and of his gospel, what shall be his answer as to how the preacher should proclaim it? Surely there can be but one reply—not with listlessness and philosophical reserve and coldness, but with all the flaming earnestness and glowing conviction of a soul on fire with love for the Saviour and with intense solicitude for the unsaved. There is a distinct demand at present for more real passion in the pulpit. The Methodist Recorder, of London, discourses upon what it regards as a serious defect in the preaching of our times—the lack of the power of a profound passionateness in our modern preaching. We are convinced that the deficiency is not something which is confined to the British Isles. It is also discoverable on this side of the water, and we believe that it has impressed itself upon many careful observers of our present-day tendencies.

The writer in the Recorder expressed himself so intelligibly and to the point that we cannot do better than to transfer bodily some of his trenchant paragraphs. He writes:

“If I am not greatly mistaken we are losing the note of passion that commonly characterized preachers half a century ago and later; and there is no change more intimately and vitally bound up with those defects and maladies of church life which we

are to-day with one voice deploring. 'The ministry of to-day is largely a passionless ministry' is a minister's confession, made in the light of long experience, of wide observation and of clear judgment; and his testimony is the testimony of many others. We have shared in the educational advancement of our time, one of the effects of which is, for the present, to exalt the intellect, disparaging meantime the offices of the heart and the emotions in the sphere of religion. Under this restraint the preacher too often confuses the nature of a sermon with that of a lecture, and is more wishful to speak with the balanced and cautious judgment of the student than with the authority of a personal witness, or the passion of a prophet. The making of a sermon is under these conditions an exercise of the mind, and when it is delivered it is judged as the product of a mental effort, the achievement of the human mind, rather than as a message from God mediated through the glowing conviction and personal experience of a living soul. Behind the message there is, to the average hearer, an active mind rather than a living man.

"So far has this influence carried us that, in many circles, to display feeling from the pulpit would be considered as an offense against good form, and to be known as an 'emotional preacher' would, in most places, injure a man's reputation. There is something to be said, however, for the severity of this judgment. It happens sometimes that the accidents of passion are offered for its essence, the garments instead of the soul; genuine feeling is in other cases associated with such mannerisms of voice and gesture as naturally offend the hearer, while in

others, again, it has been noticed that the depth of a preacher's feeling was in proportion to the shallowness of his thought. All these things have tended to raise prejudice against the man who displays feeling in the pulpit, and the emotional preacher has less than a good name in the churches. But passion is not a thing of the voice nor of bodily gesture, it is of the heart; for its expression it depends, not on a certain volume of sound, nor a rush of words; it can, to be sure, thunder with the sound of many waters; but it can also whisper with the still small voice; and whatever its vehicle, where it is real it is never mistaken or misjudged.

"The absence of passion in the preacher is evidence both of mental error and of serious moral failure; of mental error, since the preacher who is content to expound texts, or to piece together for his hearers the fragments of his own knowledge cannot have rightly conceived his office. To expound the Bible is not the end of our vocation, but only the method of our work. We are not sent to expound problems nor to construe history, but to save souls, to form character, to build the temple of God in the hearts of his redeemed people; and everything else, the handling of all problems, the expounding of all truth, must serve this end."

Let us hear, for a moment, testimony on the other side, from another quarter. A writer in the American Israelite, touching on this question of emotion in religion and passion in preaching, says: "The Jew could never see the good of revival or evangelistic meetings. He does not believe much in an emotional religion. He believes that the emotions play a part, and a prominent part, in religion, but he deprecates

giving the emotions full sway in religion. He feels that emotionalism will ultimately lose itself in hysteria and maniacal fanaticism. The emotions must be held in check by the intellect and the reason, if we are to get good and lasting results."

While there is truth in what is above said as to the balance necessary to be preserved between the feelings and the intellect, we sincerely believe that the pendulum is swinging over too far toward a somewhat frigid and altogether too unimpassioned style of pulpit address. What may be ideal for modern Judaism, with its rationalism, ought scarcely to be suitable for an earnest, evangelistic Christianity. It would be far better for our preachers, if they have any genuine feelings, and are not intellectual icebergs, to give those feelings a chance once in a while, to vent themselves. We have never been able to see why it is that the feelings, with which the good Father has endowed his children as a supreme gift from himself, should be so frequently regarded as something almost disreputable—to be ashamed of and to be somewhat sedulously and severely repressed. The emotional nature has its rights quite as much as the intellectual. To crowd the emotions into the hold, and to nail the hatches down over them, is neither necessary nor warranted.

If our ministers do not possess any particular feelings which are in good working order, it will pay many of them to cultivate this part of their natures, and not be so dreadfully formal, precise, and distastefully cold. If they actually do have some decent equipment of feelings, and yet are all the time sitting down hard on them, it would be well for them once in a while to relieve the pressure and let the fire fly.

Nothing terrible will happen; and even the stolidest hearer will feel an unwonted and gratifying warmth in the region of his marble heart.

Of course, we do not want fuss and fustian, "sound and fury signifying nothing," "tearing a passion to tatters." There must be *real* emotion, *real* passion and not the caricature of it when men yell and pound over nothing in a "worked-up" zeal and a perspiration mistaken for an inspiration. And we cannot conceive how any true minister, who realizes, as he should, the gravity of the business of saving souls, and the eternal issues for weal or woe involved in the choices that determine character; who has experienced personally the deep truths of the gospel of Christ, and is convinced of the absolute necessity of Jesus for a sinful humanity, can ever lack the genuine note of profound, heartfelt passion in his preaching. There is a distinct and imperative call for more of it in the pulpits of to-day.

CHAPTER V

THE BIBLE AND SPIRITUAL POWER

THOSE who are saying that this is an undogmatic age, an age educated by the scientific spirit to demand evidence and proof suitable to the case in all teaching, are at the same time telling us that the present trend toward biblical study ought to be utilized in evangelistic preaching. The general, unevangelized public will listen to appeals to what is written in the Book with much more attention and regard than they will to any outlining or demonstration in a metaphysical way of theological systems. To bring to Christ through careful indoctrination in the Holy Word is surely a method which appears at once rational and effective, even if it seems to lack sensational elements and to call for some time in the process. This is the great work which lies upon our Sunday schools to-day. And, outside of them, there are hundreds who are intensely interested in the figure of Christ, and who have taken up the study of the Bible, perhaps in a literary way at first, who are ripe for the harvest.

If one would know what Christianity is, about the surest road to it is a thorough and sympathetic study of the life of Christ as told by the evangelists. To bring out his spirit, to unfold his ideals and impress them upon mind and heart through the devout and systematic study of the Gospels, is a program for the minister and Sunday school teacher that must inevitably bear much fruit. It will require, too, the

most studious and prayerful application. For, to grasp great and creative principles, to penetrate to the depths of spiritual significance, to make broad and inspiring generalizations, is not a task for the superficial. But the great hope of the Church to-day is in the host of young people in Sunday schools and in Epworth Leagues and Christian Endeavor Societies, who out of an enthusiastic and systematic study of the Bible may be able to lead many to the Saviour.

A secretary of the American Bible Society has presented one feature of Bible circulation which has not been sufficiently recognized. The Bible is itself an evangelist. Men are converted through preaching; but very frequently numbers have been awakened and converted—as might have been anticipated—without a preacher and simply by reading the Scriptures. And even with a preacher no message can be effective and no conversion can be lasting without the Bible in the hands of the convert. The man and the Book must go together for the best missionary work. But frequently the Book goes ahead of the man, prepares the way, makes converts eager for the preaching, and becomes, as has been said, “the plowshare for foreign missionary work.”

The secretary tells of one man who commenced reading the Bible, felt convicted, threw the book down, but came back to it again and again, until he yielded to its power. In Mexico and South America missions and churches have almost invariably sprung up in the track of the traveling colporteur distributing his Bibles. In one place in South America, the priests gathered up the Bibles, and burned them in the square, vainly repeating the methods of

the sixteenth century in the twentieth. Fourteen native Chinese colporteurs were martyrs to the Christian faith in the Boxer uprising. In China itself, during that disturbance, the demand for Bibles fell off only 63,000 out of the usual supply of half a million copies.

The Church of the Pentecost was the first Bible Society. It revered the Word, and it made immediate plans to circulate it, so that before the close of the second century the apostolic Church had sent its Scriptures over the known world. But our modern Pentecost, whereby the Church speaks with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance; whereby Chinamen, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Arabs, Armenians, East Indians, Africans, and Pacific Islanders are enabled to say, like the Parthians, Medes, and Cretans of old, "We hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God"—this manifests convincingly in our day the presence of God and Christ and the descent of the Spirit. With presses thundering in New York, London, Berlin, Beyrout, Foochow, Shanghai, and Yokohama, producing the Bible in over three hundred languages and dialects by the millions of copies annually, and spreading them broadcast over the earth, surely the conversion of all nations to Christ must go on with accelerated pace until the glad millennial day.

Among the writer's most cherished friends was a certain layman, once prominent in the councils of the Church but now translated, whose example in regard to the study of the Bible might well stand as an inspiration to our laity and clergy alike. For over forty years he made it a practice to devote an hour daily to the close reading of the Scriptures. At

the head of a great business firm, he yet found time, by taking a vest-pocket edition of the Book with him, to memorize daily four verses as he rode to and from his office. More than that: after his graduation from college he kept up his acquaintance with his classical studies, and especially with his Greek New Testament, with which he became so familiar that at last he knew it practically by heart. This loving study led him to the reading and comparison of the various translations and revisions of our modern times—that of Alexander Campbell, of the Baptists, of Alford, of Conybeare and Howson, of the revisers of 1881; and when we found him one day, convalescing after a sickness, he was deep in the edition of the American Revisers, whose work he praised enthusiastically. His wife was one with him in this research, and when we wanted a reference she turned to it readily without a concordance. It was refreshing and reassuring to see such veneration and affection for a book which had so grown to be a part of his very existence. We conversed with him on such high themes as these: the Bible as a spiritual revelation; the meaning of “the Spirit of truth”; the loyalty of Jesus to the truth; the candor of the Scriptures; the significance of “the body of sin”; the profound meanings in the various verses using “abide” and “abiding”; the prayers of Saint Paul in behalf of his converts for blamelessness of conduct and life hidden in Christ. It is his practice to look up all the cross-references given with every word and passage, and so he finds the Bible itself its own best commentator and illuminator. May it not be questioned whether our preaching to-day would not be profounder, more spiritual, more practical and help-

ful, if our ministers were more imbued with such a veritable passion for the Book? And who can compute the effect on the Christianity of our times if our laymen would, even in a measure, follow the lead of such an absorbed student of God's written revelation?

Saint Paul declared that the chief glory of the Holy Writings was their ability "to make wise"; not to impart a wisdom in Greek philosophy, in oratory or sculpture; nor yet in the administrative arts of the Romans or the subtile reasoning of the Pharisees, but in that best of all kinds of wisdom which makes for conduct, character, salvation. These Scriptures, said the apostle, had their chief mark in their profitableness for teaching, warning, leading others in the true way, instructing in all righteousness, all moralities. It was their preëminent function to make all who would be men of God—sharing the divine life—"complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

If this be, indeed, the supreme purpose of the Book, then other questions which collect about it are secondary and subsidiary. All the present-day searchings and findings of scholars concerning authorship, dates, and species of composition relate simply to the settings of the truth and not to the contained truth itself. They do not deal with nor affect the eternal and essential. Christian people ought to feel an undisturbed confidence in the "things which remain" after all possible reconstruction by modern criticism.

Indeed, is it not a little wonderful that Christians who have met Jesus in the ways and walks of daily life; for whom it has pleased God to reveal his Son

in them; who, in special crises as well as in the common round of existence, have had first-hand, vital, and illuminating experiences of Christ as a living, inspiring, redeeming Saviour—is it not wonderful that they should get into any alarm lest this Christ, whom they have so seen and known, should be disproved and discredited by criticism? And as we look down the centuries past, and behold the palpable and amazing historical results of Christianity—and if there were no other proof of the inspiration of our religion and the Scriptures, this would be a sufficient one—is it not a little surprising to note the concern of some good people lest any recent discoveries as to the origin and composition of certain manuscripts should “disprove” all that stupendous actuality of moral and spiritual accomplishment and transformation?

Writing in the *Methodist Times*, of London, that eminent and consecrated leader of the Wesleyan host, Dr. John Shaw Banks, says, “Historical criticism of Scripture busies itself with questions of date, authorship, structure; questions apart, to a great extent, from the substance and sense of Scripture.” This substance he characterizes in the following words: “Scripture is throughout a message of redemption. We rightly enough say that its sole theme is religion, not history, science, cosmogony, but religion; and, still further, religion as redemption. All other teachings are subsidiary to this. God is a redeeming God; the scene unfolded before us is the growth of the redemptive work. All Scripture is a gospel. Its purpose is to point out the way of salvation.”

To our mind it is incontrovertibly true that we

make too much of questions of date and authorship, however interesting such questions may be and however legitimate and necessary it may be to try to determine them. But, quite apart from Elohist and Jehovist, apart from the identification of the Priestly Code or the Prophetic Narration or the Deuteronomic writing, the Pentateuch has a spiritual value which was felt long before "E" or "J" or "JE" or "D" were ever discovered or named. There is certainly more to Jonah than the "whale," infinitely more in the revelation of the tender mercies of a compassionate God with a love for all his children of every race, the manifestation too of a missionary impulse springing up among the Hebrews. There is vastly more to Isaiah than any scholastic problem of single, double, or multiple authorship. Above everything else sounds out the call: "Cease to do evil; learn to do well." We do not know who wrote the book of Job, the grandest poem of the ages; we do not know, with certainty, who wrote the book of Hebrews. But this fact does not prevent us from getting out of these writings the eternal truths meant for our souls. In our childhood we may have imagined that David composed all the book of Psalms. Later we discovered that the Psalter itself named other authors, and that many psalms were anonymous. Nevertheless, just as we sing every Sunday hymns the names of whose authors we do not look at, and many marked "unknown," and yet get their spiritual inspiration despite our indifference or ignorance, so the psalms find an echo in our souls, whoever may have written them. Somebody wrote that glorious outburst of trust—somebody had that sublime experience of

deliverance and joy, and we can make it our own, if we will, by appropriation.

It really makes little difference when or by whom such eternal realities of the soul-life were first voiced. The lofty strains of Homer, the dialogues of Plato, the vision of Dante—what matter essentially whether their date was five hundred years this way or that, before Copernicus or after? They are everlastingly true. Thus it is with the great proclamations of the Spirit, with the inspired words of prophet and apostle. The soul can disregard almanacs and chronological tables. Divisions of time are not for the spirit which inhabiteth eternity.

One long-to-be-remembered evening we spent while a lady was sitting at her piano—a new and fine one—and we were listening to some nocturnes of Chopin beautifully rendered. By and by we asked for some old favorites, and for the next hour the strains which filled the room with tenderest suggestions were those of “Ben Bolt,” “The Land o’ the Leal,” “The Bells of Shandon,” “Bonnie Doon,” “John Anderson, My Jo’,” “Old Folks at Home,” “Annie Laurie,” “Kathleen Mavourneen,” “The Last Rose of Summer,” “Robin Adair,” “With Verdure Clad,” “Old Kentucky Home,” and many others redolent with memories of the past. No matter how often we hear these melodies of the long ago, there is a pathos and sweetness in them which touches our hearts beyond expression and in a way that the brand-new composition, put on sale last week in the music store, can never do. For these old and beloved songs have become a part of our lives and have intertwined themselves with our sacredest recollections. Most of them too were evidently born of a true inspiration.

They came from the heart and they speak a natural language to the heart.

It is precisely so with the familiar chapters and verses of the Bible. Mr. Ingersoll used to make very merry over the reverence and love Christians showed for a book so old—antiquated, he would say—and asked derisively what it was possible for people, living several thousands of years ago, to know that would be valuable to us. Why, he would claim, there was more information in any volume of science, just from the press, than in the entire old Bible of those way-back Hebrews.

But the longings of man's soul are not satisfied with the facts of geology, biology, astronomy, or physiology. A small treatise of physics will contain more useful science than Deuteronomy, the Psalms, and Saint John's Gospel combined. But, nevertheless, those words in the Sacred Book, words of eternal life which

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence—truths that wake
To perish never,

—these are more to us than any newest facts about fossils, or nebulae, or protoplasms, or electrometers. They come to us fraught with the joys and sorrows of innumerable generations. They were dear to our ancestors—to grandsire, father, and mother. Our own biographies—the temptations, the trials, the passion, the triumph, the exaltations and visions of our lives—are written there in invisible ink between the lines of those well-known but infinitely precious verses. Though hoary with age, they are ever new, and their hold on our hearts and on all

human hearts to the end of time will never be weakened.

We happened one day to be scanning a Saint Louis morning paper, and our eye fell upon the brief abstract of a sermon by the Rev. George E. Bates. The preacher had taken for his text the opening declaration of the Bible—"In the beginning, God"—and had drawn from the deep suggestiveness of the word the profoundest deductions as to the main intent of the revelation contained in Holy Writ. We do not know where we have seen it expressed more concisely or more luminously. Mr. Bates said: "It has been remarked that 'the subject of the first chapter of Genesis is not the creation but the Creator—what it gives us is not a world but a God.' This remark strikes the keynote of the new thought in its attitude toward the Bible. Let those who will, search the Scriptures for the light they shed on past conceptions of science and upon the history of a unique race in the annals of the world. Let them study their literary development, and seek thus a keener appreciation of the men who wrote them. They cannot fail to be enlightened and interested. But the sincere Christian approaches the Scriptures with a different interest and purpose. He passes over the historical, the literary, and the scientific features of the Bible with small attention in his passionate search for that which the Scriptures are designed to reveal, namely, the person, will and work of God, and the nature and relationships of man. From Genesis to Revelation, in history, in law, in psalm and prophecy, in parable and epistle and apocalypse, on every page, God speaks to the human soul."

The agitation and alarm over the investigations of higher criticism are largely subsiding. We want, if possible, to protect Christian people against any panicky feeling in this era of transition and reconstruction. The foundations are not being destroyed. In that our faith is stable and unwavering. The fundamental revelations of our holy religion are untouched and unassailable. The meaning of the Bible is in its revelation of the relationships between God and man. The Bishop of Ripon (England) in his "Introduction to the Scriptures"—a small volume in the Temple Bible series which, for its reverent sanity, we are specially glad to commend—eloquently says: "There are things which cannot be shaken, and truth is the highest law, and eternal life is independent of questions of names; it does not consist in knowing dates, or in distinguishing between history and parable; but it is a knowledge of our true relationship to God, of the characteristics involved in that relationship, and of the power of realizing both it and them."

He speaks sympathetically of the pious old woman who was alive to the spiritual truths of the Bible which made clear to her, through story, psalm, and prophecy, this relationship of her soul to God, and the conditions, joys, sorrows, and experiences arising out of the desire for, or the conviction of, that relationship. "Other questions of great intellectual interest—questions of date, circumstances, literary or historical coherency, of style, language and custom—were practically outside her vision."

But what of it as far as the practical development of religion in her soul and life was concerned, and the office and service of the Bible for such develop-

ment? It is the good bishop himself who gives us a feeling description of the way any one of our devout forefathers used the Bible, a way in which many like them are profitably using it now: "He read every book of the Bible, seeking to draw from it personal edification; his mind was not anxious to settle the date of a book, or to disentangle a misplaced passage from an irrelevant context; his soul was athirst for God: he sought to read in this wonderful book the ways of God to men; he watched in its histories the indications of Providence; he observed the working out of the laws of right and wrong; he delighted in studying the character of Christ; his heart bled as he read the story of the cross; he was filled with triumph as he thought of the risen Lord."

Is not this the main thing, the radical and essential thing, to know Christ not after the flesh, in ways of literary or historical investigation, but after the Spirit? When, with Abraham, we hear a voice saying to us, "Fear not! I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward"; when, with Joshua, we receive this heartening assurance, "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee"; when, with the psalmist, we can indeed feel, amid all the vicissitudes of life, that the Lord is really our Shepherd, that we shall want absolutely nothing, that goodness and mercy shall follow us forever, that the God of Jacob is our refuge too; when, with John, we can know of a truth, in the depths of our hearts, that "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God"; when, with Paul, facing disaster and death, we can say, "None of these things move me," "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"—then we know the real and abiding truth of the Bible. The best trans-

lation of the Bible is not when its original Hebrew or Greek is turned into English or German, but when the divine experiences of its patriarchs and seers are turned into the vernacular of our own experience, and we find that they supply us with a language for the deep emotions of our souls, and the rapturous visions of God which we too, in our day, repeat after them and share with them.

Consequently, it is the utterance of the soundest common sense, as well as the verdict of the spiritual nature, which the Bishop of Ripon further expresses: "Uncertainty about minor matters, such as the date of events, or the order of some chapters, or on such questions as whether a particular narrative is parable or fact, may well be accepted, while uncertainty about practical duties of faith and life is intolerable. Hence all must feel that there is a great difference between the subsidiary facts of the Bible history, and the great spiritual principles which are unfolded to us there. Some matters and incidents might easily have been otherwise; and if they had been so, no difference would have been felt by us; we should not have been deprived of any single spiritual truth. It is really not important to us to know how many knives were brought back from Babylon, or how many people were slaughtered in a certain battle."

But it does make a vast difference about the words of eternal life, the words which shall never pass away, the speech of God to the soul of man, the teachings of Jesus which lay bare the very secrets of men's hearts. Pondering on these words, the soul grows in its devotional life, in its aspirations Godward.

There are doubtless many now who feel that they need, like the disciples of Christ, to be taught how to pray. They are quite conscious that they do not know how to pray as they ought. Even when they have no lack of fluency, they are aware that their petitions are in danger of running into ruts, and they lose fervency through repetition. We believe that one of the very best ways of praying is in connection with our reading of the Bible. As we read some devotional psalm of rapturous adoration and yearning after God; as we follow the words of Jesus, commencing with the Beatitudes, through the Sermon on the Mount and in many a precious parable and admonition; as we let Paul and John and James and Peter speak to us through their deep and searching epistles, we shall gain great spiritual benefit if we let our thoughts rise definitely Godward with a fervent supplication that those virtues and truths may be indeed realized in our own lives. At family worship and in private devotion it is an excellent thing, to use an old-time phrase, to "pray it in."

One may or may not literally "read the Bible upon his knees." But let the attitude of his soul be constantly toward God as he reads, a mental frame of ardent desire for the possession of the "deep things" which come to his recognition out of the Scriptures. In word or thought, let him pray: "O, my Father, lead me into this experience; give me this faith; sanctify my soul in this grace; let me have this vision of thyself and thy will and law and love and purpose!" So shall one's prayers never lack variety or fall into thoughtless repetitiousness. They shall be freighted with all the riches of the spiritual attainment of the men of faith through the

ages. For, if we form the habit we have just described, we need not limit it to the Bible. Wherever, in all our reading of good books, we meet some beautiful expression of a noble ideal, we can turn it immediately into a prayer. And so with what we hear spoken inspiringly in sermon or address or in conversation, so with the meditation of our own hearts. Let us vocally or silently say to it all, "Amen"—"So let it be, Lord, in my life." Thus shall we be able, almost literally, to "pray always," and not at set times merely, and the returns to us in blessing and spirituality shall be of incalculable worth.

We are convinced that preachers in preparing their sermons frequently do not adequately appreciate the great reënforcement to their message which they might receive if they made more direct, full, and intelligent use of the Scriptures. According to Webster, our word "sermon" comes from a Latin root which means "to join or connect." Hence a sermon is a connected discourse. But how frequently is it anything but that! It is made up of a miscellaneous series of observations, following each other in a rather loose order, and relating to some general theme. We do not mean to imply that it may not be good or beneficial, but question whether there is a very strict connection in it. This characteristic of disconnectedness probably comes, in most cases, from choosing a subject to develop instead of a text of Scripture to explain and enforce. Often the minister prepares his sermon on some such general theme as love, or faith, or patience, or hope, and, after it is finished, goes to hunting some sort of a text which may serve as a caption for it,

but which neither he nor his congregation keeps in mind two minutes after it is announced. Such texts have been rather felicitously described as "pre-texts."

Of course all the traditions of the pulpit demand that the minister shall take a text from the Bible, even when he does not preach from it. If this were not the case, any good quotation from Shakespeare, Browning, or Tennyson might serve as caption just as well, as far as any subsequent attention is paid to the text by the preacher. He would get along quite as well as regards any help he or his auditors get from the text itself. Would it not be better when he is to elaborate some general theme—and such preaching, we must admit, is frequently both legitimate and helpful—if, instead of announcing any one verse as though he were about to unfold its meaning, the preacher would read quite a large number of verses touching various phases of the truth, and then build his discourse upon their generalized teaching? And would it not be better still if our preachers would more frequently give us strictly textual sermons, keeping very close to the words and meaning of Holy Writ, and, without wandering, draw out the deeper significances which lie hidden in the verse, but which, when brought forth, are plainly perceived to be included, although all undiscerned before?

When mental and spiritual insight and originality are thus applied to the Scriptures, they become a veritable bonanza for the reverent student, and untold treasures can be taken thence for his people. His own thoughts may run very shallow in time, if he makes all his sermons on the essay or oration

plan, spinning them out of his own reading or cogitations, and tacking a hastily selected text, not always the most appropriate one, onto them afterward. And sometimes, it must be sadly conceded, as in the case of the pulpit sensationalist, the text is about the only thing religious in what may be charitably termed "an address." But the riches of the Bible, in the illimitable suggestiveness of its unsearchable truths, will never be exhausted. In the language of miners, the preacher will strike a rich lead there, and the vein will grow thicker all the time.

Phillips Brooks, in this country, was notably successful in this kind of preaching, as is Watkinson, of London, and as was Robertson, of Brighton. These men gratefully surprise us by throwing powerful new lights upon the most familiar texts, and great lessons for life, which were evidently there and not read into them nor forced upon them, start out of the well-known words. They thrill us with a sudden and peculiar joy, making the Bible mean vastly more to us every time we listen to such discourses. Sermons like these, flowing out from profound texts, abide in the memory because the text abides with its words as a memoriter hint to help us remember the preacher's noble exposition. We commend the making of such sermons for more frequent usage by our ministers. But let them take the richest texts, full of the finest spiritual meanings, and not some accidental verse which can yield only the most ordinary commonplaces, and these, perhaps, only by a violent effort of imagination.

Who can doubt too that one of the highest services which any true minister can render his people is to infuse them with a fresh enthusiasm for a steady,

progressive reading and study of the Word? It is for him, too, to show how a right use of intelligence and reason can be successfully combined with reverence and trust in this study. A lecturer to whom we recently listened threw upon the screen the picture of an enormous sperm whale in the act of devouring a huge cuttlefish sixty feet long. He declared he had seen sharks, even bigger than that, lying whole within the bellies of such whales, along with a respectable cargo of smaller fish. The right whale has a different sort of a throat, but, as for the sperm whale, he could, as a preacher lately proclaimed, take down a whole trolley-load of Jonahs through his capacious mouth, sixty feet wide, and his yawning abyss of a throat, into his Mammoth-Cave stomach. But when a good old lady rises in prayer meeting and says, as we once heard one say, that, if the Bible had declared that Jonah swallowed the whale rather than that the whale swallowed Jonah, she would have believed it, we confess to a trifle of hesitation. We later asked an intelligent woman what she thought of such a statement, and her ready reply was, "Well, the Bible doesn't say any such absurd things." We felt relieved. There is no need of multiplying fictitious difficulties for faith. There is no need of raising tests for belief which the Bible itself does not raise. There is no need of stating doctrines, which can be intelligently put, in a way that places a strain upon the reason. We once heard a preacher who took for his text, "How can these things be?" He then proceeded to give every dogma of the Christian Church a setting as opposed as imaginable to any rational expression of it, and then, when reason revolted and asked in

dismay how it could possibly be, he threw himself triumphantly on the omnipotence of God—"With God all things are possible!" But God does not put his omnipotence at the service of unreason, or perform capricious freaks to baffle and confuse our intelligence in hopeless mazes. If he works miracles which we cannot comprehend, he at least lets us see some reason for them. If there are profound and mysterious doctrines, there are yet rays of light, which come out of their depths and which leave the mind in something better than Egyptian darkness—nay, which illuminate and satisfy it.

An excellent method of training a congregation to an aroused interest in the Sacred Word has been suggested. A religious journalist has advocated the practice in church of the worshipers in the pews having their open Bibles to follow the lessons of the day, which the preachers shall read from some of the several new translations or paraphrases, as found in the Twentieth Century New Testament, the Modern Reader's Bible, the Messages of the Bible, and others. If such a reading were accompanied with brief and carefully thought-out comment, the writer believes—and we are inclined to agree with him—that it "would give to many worshipers a new interest in the Bible, and move them to a fresh study of it; it would hold the attention of those on whose ears the familiar words of the King James Bible fall unheeded."

We would not be understood as making too general and sweeping statements as to the indifference of Christians regarding Bible study. It is one of the good signs of the times—even in the midst of all the critical investigation of the Scriptures—that so

many people, young and old, are becoming awakened to the message of inspiration. There is in many rather unsuspected quarters a revival of interest in the Old Book. We have been told of a club of women in Chicago, composed of Protestants, Catholics, Jewesses, agnostics, secularists—all stripes of faith and no faith—who, after exhausting Browning, Tennyson, Ibsen, and everybody else, invited a professor of Chicago University to take them through some books of the Bible in a literary but not a religious way. He commenced with Job and Ecclesiastes, and they were greatly attracted by them. The next year he took up with them the Prophets; the third, the Acts of the Apostles; and in the fourth, introduced this mixed club, now thoroughly interested, to the Gospels. Some were religiously aroused; some had taken to reading the Bible in private and devotionally, and others had gone to teaching in the Sunday school. His point was well taken: through any gate—literary, historical, archæological, if not practical and devotional—get people into the Scripture-fields, and the good outcome may be trusted to itself.

In the experience of many pastors it is a constant surprise and disappointment to observe how few church members ever enter the Sunday school or take advantage of its instruction in God's Word. In some schools there are large adult Bible classes, but these have been the exception. At present, however, such classes are multiplying, and the situation is somewhat relieved when we think of the growing numbers in the home department of the Sunday school, which now has its own literature and is established in permanence. We have not the statistics,

but we have the impression that there are comparatively few men enrolled in this department. The Men and Religion Movement may bring about a better condition.

We confess we cannot understand the seeming indifference of Christian people to the reverent and intelligent study of the Scriptures. It is a serious question whether the majority of our people are not neglecting the private reading of the Bible for the daily newspaper and the current magazine. We hope we are wrong, but we cannot escape our impression. The young people, in their devotional organizations, are being stimulated to scriptural study, and are quite generally applying themselves to it, but how is it with those older—their fathers and mothers?

Meanwhile there is evidently a great amount of reverence for the Bible still surviving, and there is much resentment whenever it is supposed to be attacked. This is well and promising, but too general to yield spiritual results, which can come only from a definite, systematic, studious, and reverential acquaintance with the Holy Writings. Considering what rich and illuminating stores of wisdom and information are now available for the explanation of the sacred text, it becomes an increasing mystery why all Christian people are not engaged in its regular study, and why the most of them are not in our Bible schools taking advantage of the flood of light that now pours over the wonderful revelation of truth. It would seem reasonable to expect a veritable passion for such knowledge, and we have faith to believe that it will yet come.

Dr. W. W. White once presented an illuminating

article in the Bible Record on "The Divine Library: Its Abuse and Use." Dr. White does not believe in any flippant and cheap study of the Bible. He thinks we want no bibliolatry, no worship of a book, but in this irreverent age more reverence for the Word of God should dwell in us. Second-hand Bible study should be avoided, and men should do their own thinking and concluding. On the other hand, a sweeping refusal to use any helps in Bible study would be just as much a mistake as to depend altogether upon them. Some people even repudiate the Revised Version. There is a story of a deacon who said that if the Authorized Version was good enough for Saint Paul, it was good enough for him. But the same spirit that would keep us from using the suggestions of other men would prevent us also from listening to expository sermons.

"Intellectual effort," says Dr. White, "is not incompatible with true piety and the deepest spirituality in understanding the Bible. Rather, it is essential to it; for all profitable meditation upon the Word of God involves a mental grasp of its truth. Because the Bible is more than literature, it is none the less true literature." We want the right attitude of the soul in its study, but there is no reason why a soul in a right attitude should not use the best methods. More than mere snatches of time, when the mind is dull, should be accorded the Book. It should have a fair chance with other books in serious study. It is an equally flagrant mistake to treat it exactly like any other book, in forgetfulness of its origin and of its direct appeal to the spiritual life. Bible study should be comprehensive and not fragmentary, after the style which has been denominated

“plum-picking”; that is, the selection of “nice verses” to repeat in meetings. It is, doubtless, all right to have favorite chapters, but not to the exclusion of a general use of the Book. There must be a variety of foods to sustain life. For well-balanced men there must be the balance of a full knowledge of the Scriptures, and favoritism for certain books must not go to the extent of leaving the reader ignorant of the Bible as a whole.

Professor William Lyon Phelps, of Yale, proposes the substitution of the Bible (Authorized Version) for the selections from the English classics now required for college entrance examinations. He advocates this, in the first place, because of the lamentable ignorance of the English Bible on the part of college students. Because of this he would erase every list of books that has thus far been tried or suggested and put the Bible in its place. In defense of this radical suggestion he says: “The ignorance of college students of biblical literature is universal, profound, and complete. The students at Harvard and Yale, different as they are in many respects from their brothers in small colleges, resemble them closely here. If all the undergraduates in America could be placed in one room and tested by a common examination on the supposedly familiar stories of the Old Testament, I mean on such instances as Adam, Eve, and the Garden of Eden, Noah, Samson, David and Goliath, Moses and Pharaoh, the result would be a magnificent contribution to American humor. The experience of teachers with other books is almost never the same in two institutions of learning; but ask any teacher in the United States what luck he has with the Bible,

and he throws up his hands in despair. I inquired of one fine young specimen of American manhood what he thought Shakespeare meant by the phrase, 'Here we feel not the penalty of Adam,' and he replied, 'It was the mark put upon Adam for having slain his brother.' To another lad, who was every inch a gentleman, I put the question, 'Explain the line, "Or memorize another Golgotha,"' and his face became a blank; I came to his relief with the remark, 'Golgotha is a New Testament reference.' A light of intelligence illumined his handsome face. He replied, 'It was Goliath.' Instances like these two are of constant and almost daily occurrence in the work of American college teachers. It is certainly unfortunate that the best book ever printed should be so little known, and that the frequent references to it in practically every English author should be meaningless."

We heard recently of a young man—a candidate for the ministry—who was asked who wrote the book of Jeremiah. At first he looked blank. Then, brightening up, he replied, "I think he was a Jew." Another averred his belief that it was Christ who led the children of Israel through the wilderness. Another had a vague conception that "Sodom and Gomorrah were a man and a woman back there somewhere in the Old Testament." One student came to his professor asking if the book of Daniel was not a very difficult book. "In many ways, yes," was the answer. "What is the chief difficulty you discover in it?" "My chief difficulty," replied the student, "is to find it." Another, being asked to name one of the catholic epistles, after some hesitation proposed Paul's Epistle to the Romans. "He

wrote that to the Roman Catholics," he said. Another was found hunting for "Hebrews" in the Old Testament, and so on. It would be ridiculous if it were not pitiable.

Furthermore, Professor Phelps argues for his suggestion on the basis of literature itself. He would refuse to allow any candidate to enter a university until he had passed a satisfactory examination on the Bible. The collection of books making up the Bible comprises as great a literature, to say the least, as the classics of Greece and Rome. They have entered more intimately into our own literature and our customs, laws, and institutions. To be ignorant of them is to be ignorant where knowledge is most absolutely essential and the absence of it least excusable. Professor Phelps contends that "the Bible has within its pages every single kind of literature that any proposed list of English classics contains; it has narrative, descriptive, poetical, dramatic, argumentative, and oratorical passages. It covers everything that the ingenuity of a committee in arranging for an English list could possibly discover. . . . Priests, atheists, skeptics, devotees, agnostics, and evangelists are all agreed that the Authorized Version of the English Bible is the best example of English composition that the world has ever seen. It combines the noblest prose and poetry with the utmost simplicity of diction."

But it is not only in the schools that the Bible needs to be introduced and given a larger chance. We fear it would be a depressing revelation to many pastors if they could take a census of their membership, and discover in how few homes, comparatively, the practice of daily family worship, with the read-

ing of a biblical chapter, is still observed. Perhaps the pastor does not care to know the specific data. It is enough for him to be convinced of the fact of a decided declension in this phase of religion. It seems to us that this is one of the subjects which could, with great profit, be used in many of the pulpits of the land.

To anyone accustomed to such a holy observance as family worship there is little need of emphasizing the benefits therefrom. There is nothing that will act more beneficially upon the piety of each individual of the home membership; nothing which will prove a firmer and dearer tie to keep the family circle closely bound together; nothing that will so sanctify human love and elevate it to the rank of a sacrament; nothing that will so cement the affections of husbands and wives, and more surely prevent the fallings-out, separations, and divorces so painfully prevalent at present; nothing that will so draw the affections of brothers and sisters together, turn the hearts of fathers to their children and of children to their fathers; nothing which, by bringing every perplexity and anxiety to God, will so help over the hard places in the home life and in business; nothing that will so promote that best kind of all genuine religion which finds both its most legitimate field and function in the home, and the largest opportunity of its illustration in mutual love, unselfish serviceableness, and the contribution of each to the higher life of the others.

Praying for guidance, the day begins with the consciousness of the companionship of God. As a kind of sub-current running through their busiest hours, men may be prompted to grow aware of the

divine life and leading. They shall be better kept from sin if they have sincerely implored that their thoughts and acts may be under the Spirit's influence. The reading, with free comment and explanation, of the Bible in the midst of the family group—the children, perhaps, interrupting to ask some question and understand more clearly—is a rare delight. Never is the priesthood of true believers better illustrated than when, as in the "Cotter's Saturday Night," "the priestlike father reads the sacred page,"

Then kneeling down, to heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays.

Indeed, as Burns well intimates, religion never seems more real than at the family altar, where, of necessity, all display is ruled out. After depicting his immortal scene, he says:

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!

We are firmly convinced that one of the best preparations for an extensive religious awakening throughout our Christendom would be a general revival of interest in all Christian homes of the institution of family worship.

Thus in every way, by encouraging the devotional use of the Bible in the home, by advocating and illustrating it from the pulpit, by making the Sunday school more enlarged and efficient, by utilizing the incalculable services of seminaries and colleges, may we bring about a more general and appreciative interest in the Bible, and, by consequence, a deeper and much-needed spirituality in the Church and community.

CHAPTER VI

POWER IN THE INNER LIFE

CHRISTIANS have made much of the appeal to consciousness and "experience" in the religious life. The whole trend of religion to-day is toward this experimental test. He that is willing to do God's will shall know. Lyman Abbott, in a recent essay on "The Religious Rights of Man," says: "This is religion—the personal perception of the Infinite. This is the quest of humanity—not a complete knowledge, not a comprehensive system, but God Himself, nothing else than God Himself. And such a quest must necessarily be personal. It must be conducted by each man for himself. It cannot be done vicariously."

It is this we must contend for and bear witness to—the first-hand knowledge of God and of his grace in Jesus Christ, accessible to every man, capable of being directly testified to by any man, however humble. It is this which constitutes the peculiar uniqueness of Christianity—the transforming contact of the Unseen with man in his guilt, the new birth from above, the miracle of the Spirit's supernatural action in the heart and life. Christianity is not simply a philosophy or a scheme of doctrine to be held in the intellect and tested by reason, but a life which may be experienced and proclaimed by word and act. And, in an age of science, which demands fact and test and proof, it meets the full demands of those who would challenge its credibility.

James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" would seem to reduce religious experience to an altogether too general and vague a thing, and to make it consist in any rapt state of solemnity, happiness, courage, self-abnegation, or ecstasy. We quote what this author says: "When we survey the whole field of religion we find a great variety in the thoughts that have prevailed there; but the feelings on the one hand and the conduct on the other are almost always the same, for Stoic, Christian, and Buddhist saints are practically indistinguishable in their lives." This seems to us to surrender the whole case as far as Christianity makes its claims to being a unique revelation and a religion, standing, like its God and Christ, alone, unapproachable, in a class which it occupies all by itself and shares with no other. We do not believe that the comparison of the lives and experiences of the devotees of other religions will exhibit essential equality in purity and true holiness with those of our faith. If that were so, there would be little reason for missionary efforts. Neither our missionaries on heathen soil nor the converts from heathenism would admit the truth of such an affirmation.

Another and more general criticism we must make against such books and against the products of the whole school of the new psychology that interprets religious moods largely in physiological terms. While we admit that they may throw much light on the phenomena of religion, and help us to understand and direct them, nevertheless, the analysis strikes us as unpleasantly like a piece of vivisection. We do not enjoy having the holiest raptures of faith coolly taken apart in the laboratory as a chemical

might be resolved into its bases and gases. There is something in the lofty ecstasy of a holy faith so different from the cool, investigating temper of the scientist that the vision seems to fade when brought under microscope and tried by test tubes. It is like a mathematician trying to compute a poem; like a bank cashier trying to estimate an oratorio in the units of the money market. It is a carving-up of the human heart to discover the hiding place of its profoundest emotions, and to lay bare its secrets as evidently as fossils or acids can be named and tabulated.

It may be we are all wrong. We acknowledge that it is more as a feeling than as a definite conception that we have this prejudice. But we are prompted to say to the scientists that there are some things not dreamed of in their philosophy—some things that lie outside of “the laboratory method” and are too internal and sacred to yield their innermost meaning to any psychological research whatever.

Nevertheless, in bringing to the front religious experience as a fact which must be admitted and accounted for by scientific investigators, Dr. James has put all evangelical Christianity in his debt. For it is to the great facts of experience that Christianity has always made its appeal, and to these experimental and satisfying graces and evidences of the work of God in the heart that she has always invited her converts. Our faith puts before the world the challenge to Nathanael—a test which ought to be thoroughly agreeable to a scientific age, which believes in proving all things and which should receive its generous indorsement—“Come and see.”

And this experience of the believer, this conscious-

ness of the divine operation on the heart, is the same for the believer of the twentieth century as it was for him of the first century. Systems of thought and schools of theology may rise and wane, but this primal evidence, known to the converted and trusting soul at first-hand, does not alter or pass away. One of the most popular of the melodies of the Jubilee Singers is that whose refrain runs like this:

O the old-time religion!
It was good enough for father,
It was good enough for mother,
And it's good enough for me.

It rarely fails to strike a responsive chord in the hearts of the auditors. And with good reason. For the essentials of real religion can never change. There is always the same God to believe in and trust; the same Christ to confess and follow; the same Holy Spirit to receive for inspiration and sanctification; the same Bible to read, love, and obey; the same homely code of duty to regard and practice; the same injunction of love to God and neighbor to observe; the same obligation of prayer, self-denial, philanthropy, and humanitarianism; the same glorious gospel to listen to and rejoice in; the same heaven and immortality in the future.

Theology, as the science of religion and the interpretation of great religious realities, may advance and offer new definitions and expositions from generation to generation. We are not singing about the old-time theology which was good enough for father, good enough for mother, and is good enough for us. Martin Luther and John Wesley, at least, thought that their theology was a good deal better than that of many of their ancestors.

We must keep this distinction ever clearly in mind. Is there some theologian to-day who, because of his wider and juster and humaner views of God and Christ and of the nature of salvation, is tempted to underrate and decry the religion of his forebears? Let him only examine the records of the past to discover his error. He will find there the unmistakable evidence of a love and loyalty to the Father and the Saviour that is not excelled, if it be equaled, in the midst of all our twentieth-century erudition. It cannot be denied that theological teaching does have a not inconsiderable effect, in the long run, upon the religious life. The Wesleyan teaching of "free grace and dying love," of "a wideness in God's mercy," brought about a different type of religious life than that which extreme Calvinism had produced. And we can all readily see some slight difference between Episcopalians, Methodists, and Presbyterians to-day. Yet, after all, the differences are superficial, and the main currents of religious life in all set in the same direction.

We cannot and do not rule out, as do the mystics, intellectual conceptions, dogmas, creedal definitions, theologies from the field of experimental religion. The intellect and reason must have a large place there. But their place is mostly in the validation and interpretation of those primal instincts of the heart and intuitions of the soul which are the controlling forces in religion. We have advanced in art and science and theology far beyond the ancient Hebrews. But it would be difficult for us to-day to find a better expression of faith than the "old-time religion" of the twenty-third and one hundred and third psalms. And for the most part of twenty

centuries theology has been engaged in trying to fathom and understand and draw out the profound utterances of the spiritual life of the New Testament writers. The "old-time religion" of Peter, John, James, and Paul is good enough for us or anybody. There can be no better, and the best that theology can do is to help us get hold of it and practice it more adequately.

Having said this, it remains to say briefly also that it is quite as much out of place for any preacher or theologian to try to estop all advance in theology, and to seek to tie the Church up to the conceptions and definitions of past ages by an appeal to "the old-time religion." Again we say that the distinction between religion and theology as the science of religion must never be forgotten or overlooked. Like the "old-time religion," good old mother earth, and the elements and forces, and the stars and physical life and vegetation remain the same. But, like theology, geology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, biology, and botany—the sciences of the things and not the things themselves—must necessarily advance and change continually. Some of us may not be holding to-day precisely the same theological views that our grandfathers and grandmothers, or even our fathers and mothers, held; and we are not to be thought therefor blameworthy. But it would not be well for us, and we will gain nothing but loss and peril, if we shall, in any measure, depart from the simple piety, the sweet and vital trust of their "old-time religion."

That religion was not ashamed of expressing itself emotionally and even rapturously. Let us consider whether Christians of our time are acting with the

largest wisdom in reacting so severely and suppressing emotion so absolutely. Even in the Methodist Church, which was once preëminent for its emotional responses to the preaching of the gospel, there is nothing now but a very dignified self-restraint. Whenever members of other denominations wish to characterize members of that Church they usually refer to them as "the shouting Methodists." This is Lyman Abbott's favorite appellation. Everyone familiar with present-day Methodism is perfectly aware that the term is an evident misnomer in this day. However applicable it might have been once, it describes them at this date no more particularly than it does other communions. The "amen corner" is a historical relic. One has to hunt for it, as for a grandfather's clock, in the shops of antiquarians.

It is true that, in the beginning of its history, Methodism represented the opposite extreme to Quakerism. One could hardly speak of "sitting in the quiet" when a good, lively Methodist meeting was in full blast. And there was excellent reason and full apology for considerable demonstration. When a people who had been long lying in a lethargic religious state were suddenly aroused from their stupor by the stirring voice of the evangelist, and brought out from their deadness and peril to a consciousness of spiritual vitality and full salvation, nothing was more natural than their joyousness and spontaneous expressions of gratitude. With such an experience it is not wonderful that Methodism came into the kingdom with a song and a shout. The new wine needed new wine skins. The old bottles—the old formulas and rituals—would have burst with the new fermentation. There was an immediate de-

mand for more "Amens" than there were in the Prayer Book, although they were not infrequent there. The outgushing and overflowing life exceeded the capacity of even ancient and stately rituals to express. The services became free and elastic, breaking through the bounds of the liturgy. The litany no longer sufficed the needs of rapturous souls whose irrepressible thanksgivings and aspirations demanded individuality and spontaneity. "Praise God!" "Hallelujah!" "Thank the Lord!"—the utterance of these exclamations was something more than surface ebullition. It came from the agitation of soul-depths. It was not an effervescence of froth and foam. It was the ecstatic cry of souls burning with love to God, filled with adoration for a Saviour who had washed their sins away. If ever these Methodist responses, originally so fresh and meaningful, came, in some times and places, to be stereotyped and meaningless, it was simply by the abuse of a legitimate privilege and practice.

For we must insist upon the validity of the feelings in religion. They have their proper place and function there. They have their due rights, and they suffer an injustice when, in the supposed interests of a cold intellectuality which would vainly attempt to imprison religion within its frigid formularies, they are crushed into dumb submission. This was what had happened in the eighteenth century when feeling was derided and a barren rationalism was rampant. Wesley set the emotions free and they resumed their rightful prerogatives in religion. The plantation melody expresses a true philosophy:

I do believe, without a doubt,
A Christian has a right to shout.

It is a far cry from such a couplet as that to the noble stanzas of "In Memoriam." But it is the same great truth which Tennyson voices in these deeply significant lines:

If e'er, when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice, "Believe no more,"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And, like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, "I have felt."

This satisfying answer of the heart Tennyson trusted to, in his search for God, rather than to any arguments from design, however logical:

I found Him, not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye.

And so there is no necessity of any confession of shame because of emotionalism in old-time Methodism. God made the feelings as truly as he made the intellect, and they have, at least, some sort of respectability. It is true that culture tends to the repression of sentiment and we become rigidly self-contained, silent, and glum. It is true that modern city life puts its stamp of uniformity and conformity upon all and runs us into its prescribed molds. We think it something disgraceful to be in any way original, to say or do anything out of the ordinary. We treat our emotions like condemned criminals, put them in dark cells or in strait-jackets, and bid them keep silence under penalty. But it would be rather difficult for anyone to assign any justifying argument for all this self-mutilation. Certainly

Methodism has gained little and lost much by lapsing into so much stiff conventionality. It ought sedulously to endeavor to keep whatever freedom of the spirit it has left.

But while we say this, we do not for a moment admit that the phrase "shouting Methodists" hits anything radically essential in Methodism. Methodism is more than an emotion. Mere emotionalism may be a sterile and unproductive thing. Methodism in its inception and throughout its history has been too practical, too zealous for piety, righteousness, reform, education, and philanthropy to come, with any justice, under any such imputation. Its emotionalism is its natural joy and its privilege rather than its fundamental essence. It is the outward expression of its real inwardness, its true genius, rather than the inner secret of the life itself. Its message is of the absolute necessity of faith and works. Emotion comes as the result of duty performed, and the relation of the two is well given by King Arthur, who describes himself to his Knights of the Table Round in these words of deep meaning:

"The King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow,
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air;
But vision—yea, his very hand and foot—
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again."

The American Israelite, as we have previously remarked, says, out and out, that it does not believe in an emotional religion, and we are not surprised. It mistakenly identifies emotion with hysteria, and contends that religion is not something that we can "get," but something that we must have, that must flow from within. We are in perfect accord with the Israelite when it argues that, though the emotional element cannot be left out of the content of religion, it must not be the only element there, or it will degenerate into fanaticism. "The Jew," says the Israelite, "does not believe in an intermittent religion. With him religion should be a constant firmness and steadiness with God. It finds its highest expression in the biblical thought, 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.' "

It might be a surprise to the Israelite and its Jewish readers to find a Christian agreeing with it so fully and heartily in its conception and definition of religion; but, nevertheless, we have no different thought of what constitutes right religion than that so well expressed by this Jewish writer. Certainly evangelical Christianity will never allow itself to be represented as a kind of mania or insanity. Emotion of the right kind has no particular relationship to hysterics, hypochondria, or any other nervous jerkiness or moodiness.

What would a political meeting be like if the most earnest exhortations and brilliant oratorical flights were met with stony silence? We do not want demonstrations quite as exuberant as those of a hot presidential campaign, but why can we not have a little more responsiveness in our religious meetings? Why should it be supposed that we honor God more

by sitting like avenues of sphinxes, and not like congregations of human beings with some remnants of emotion? Why should we allow our modern culture to altogether usurp the functions of the heart? Why should our religion, with even a large amount of intellectuality in it, become so stiff, staid, formal, and uncommonly solemn? It has got to that pass now that repression of the feelings has been carried so far, in most churches, that the good, pious old-timers are positively uncomfortable. There are many services that are "Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null."

We are not unaware of the plea for decency, order, solemnity, reverence, and believe in it all. We must be proper; but we must not be too dreadfully proper. We must not carry our propriety to the verge of impropriety. If some good brother's feelings surge up within him under the preacher's fervent presentation of the gospel truth, and he is dying to shout a little and very mildly, we must not frown upon him and bid him choke it down. We know what can be said about the brother of former days who was all the time saying "Amen" in season and out of season, when it was absurd as well as when it was applicable, falling into a meaningless habit of repetition. We do not especially want him back again, particularly if he were very noisy; but reaction from him ought not to be allowed to swing to the other extreme of being the "dumb dogs" of whom our fathers used to talk.

Let us have a few more of the "Amens" of the fathers; not vociferated loudly enough to imperil the roof, but uttered gratefully and quietly by reverent and appreciative lips, while the moistened eye pro-

claims the melted heart. Why not? Who would be hurt by it? What terrible thing would happen? It would, rather, do everybody good. It would, as we have seen it, electrify the congregation and fuse the emotions of thousands of hearts into one deep and tender feeling. We remember a sermon we were once preaching when a theological student. A big, good-humored, portly brother—he proved to be the Sunday school superintendent—with a face like the rising sun, saw that we were “laboring.” Suddenly he lifted an unctuous “Amen” somewhere from the depths of his capacious form. We gave a perceptible start, the audience smiled, but the sermon immediately limbered itself out, and that “Amen” saved the day.

In another charge in the Far West there would be, occasionally, instead of the traditional Amen, the clapping of hands and cries of “Yes, that’s so!” “That’s true.” We do not altogether recommend such responses, but would almost prefer them to the dead-and-alive manner of apathetic frigidity that has come in the present day to inflict our churches and to put them in the strait-jacket of oppressive formality. We certainly have no delight in a religious pandemonium and are not pleading for any Bedlamism in our services. But let us have a little more spontaneity and freedom. Let us bring back at least a little section of the “Amen Corner.” Why should the Salvationists, or the Protestant Episcopalians with their prayer book, have a monopoly on the responses? Let there be some such assurance as this given to devout worshipers: Brother, sister, would you like to say “Amen!” or “Hallelujah!” once in a while when the minister is preaching so

glowingly about Christ and his great salvation? Would you be grateful if you could be allowed to say it even in a subdued and eminently respectable way? Do you feel sometimes that, if you don't let it out, somehow you will run the danger of apoplexy or asphyxia. Well, out with it then! Out with it! Never mind what they think or say. Don't go around looking so apologetic and "sat-down-upon." Claim your rights in the house of God and take the liberty of a child of the Father. But exercise reason and common sense; say "Amen!" only when there's really something to say amen to; don't split the people's ears; don't over-indulge yourself nor abuse your privilege; and we hardly think the official board, in even the most aristocratic church, will venture to come around and tell you to keep still, or threaten to turn you out. They will get to liking it and doing it themselves, and the preacher will bless you.

Concerning the emotion generally associated with revivals, we believe that the late Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) spoke the right and sensible word when he was talking about the great Welsh revival: "Many object to revivals because of the splutter of sentiment with which they are associated. No doubt there are extravagances, but was a good thing to be condemned wholesale because of that? In revivals there may be much to criticize, but if there emerged a number who came home to God and lived holy lives, then God be thanked for revivals."

Not only has there been a too great elimination of emotion from our religion, too sweeping a decree against its expression, but also there seems to be some timidity about seeking for the deeper expe-

riences of grace, the true saintliness of Christian character, which surely it is the Christian's highest privilege to know and enjoy. But let us not identify saintliness with any of its mere external settings. The Freeman's Journal (Roman Catholic) of New York city says: "Why should the Methodists call any of their churches by saints' names? None of the saints were Methodists, and the Methodists don't believe in saints."

We have not learned either that Saint Matthew, or Saint Mark, or Saint Luke, or Saint John, or Saint Paul was a Roman Catholic; and we have never been able to discover any of the distinctive marks of Roman Catholicism—such as the papacy and its infallibility—in any of their writings. We scarcely think it is true that Methodists do not believe in saints, real saints, having plenty of the right kind of sanctity. But she has been so busy with their production that she has hardly had time as yet to catalogue them and issue them their halos.

We are quite willing to admit that there have been numerous men and women in the Roman Catholic Church who have lived truly saintly lives. Indeed, we rather think that, while there are not a few who are now included in the list whose claim to the distinction may be considered somewhat shadowy, and whose enrollment among the saints by official act was accomplished by some sort of politico-ecclesiastical "influence," there have been many thousands who have exhibited marked saintliness of character, but who, somehow, have missed being canonized.

And it is the same with all the other churches. A vast number of thoroughly consecrated men and

women—humble and unheralded here—have their names now written in heaven on the rolls of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn. The kind of saints that we want to-day is not of the monastic type of the past, with cowl and tonsured head. Even such a sublime “Imitation of Christ” as Thomas à Kempis has given must be superseded by an “Imitation” which shall be lived out in the open, and be manifested, not so exclusively in ecstatic prayer and contemplation, as in the actual reproduction of the character and deeds of our Master in daily living and helpfulness. Instead of robes and aureoles, our saints may appear in sack coats and trousers; instead of nimbuses, wear derby hats; instead of floating on clouds, be walking the business streets. But, all the same, in their conscientiousness, integrity, love of God and man, as proven by their piety and obedience, sympathy and philanthropy, they are just as good saints as ever trod the planet.

What is a saint? and what is saintliness? are questions which are not often raised in this practical twentieth century. Professor James tells us that the professional sainthood of former times does not satisfy us to-day. To-day helpfulness in general human affairs is deemed an essential element of worth of character, and service of man is regarded as the service of God. He tells us that in the life of saints, technically so called, extravagance arose because the spiritual faculties were strong with a relatively weak intellect. Unbalanced devoutness became fanaticism. Only masterful and aggressive characters, however, became fanatic; in gentle characters, with intense devoutness and feeble intellect,

there was imaginative absorption in the love of God, to the exclusion of all practical human interests. Between science, idealism, and democracy there has grown the need of a different conception of God.

Why should we, as Protestants, think that the list of saints is confined to those canonized by the Church? Why should we associate saintliness with effeminate features and upturned eyes? Does not every pastor know plenty of kindhearted, helpful women in his church who are just as saintly as any of the Cecelias, Catharines, Helenas, Lucias, or Sophias, to whom has been given the official prefix "Saint"? He knows too a number of men of integrity and purity, leading lives of righteousness and serviceableness, who are entitled to be denominated "Saint" quite as much as any Asaph, Augustine, Anthony, Bartholomew, Bernard, Martin, Nicolas, Michael, Sebastian, or Vincent of the past. Nay, their lives may be even sweeter, broader, Christlier than those of the old-time worthies. We do not write in order to detract from the reputation for goodness, which was most probably deserved, of any man or woman of the past whose name is now held in special and worshipful reverence. We only contend that we can never know how many are the heads that have the unseen halos around them. But God knows—the Lord knoweth them that are his. With all our heart we celebrate All Saints' Day.

Professor Coe protests that the only touchstone of Christian life must be love to God and love to fellow men, and that this life is not primarily a state of feeling, but a state of will, an attitude of mind. He thinks more than justice has been done to the melancholic or sentimental temperament, which is intro-

spective, values the future more than the present, and weighs everything by standards drawn from ideals that master the feelings. The man of action, the choleric man, as he calls him, who is nervous, prompt, intense, looking without rather than within, valuing the present as well as the future; the man of deliberation, with phlegmatic temperament, whose prevailing impulse is toward slow effectiveness—these, he contends, have not had the attention paid them that their real saintliness deserves. Traditional sainthood has rested its claims almost entirely upon ecstatic states of feeling, and the business man of to-day is not very sentimental. If to be a saint it is necessary to have visions and moods and weepings, or roll in billows of triumphant joy, or feel the utter hollowness of all secular life and the general good-for-nothingness of the world, he must admit right off that he is not “in it.” He believes that the world is a pretty good world—God’s world and not the devil’s—and he is working practically and all the time to try to make it, in the home, in business, and in politics, a continuously bettering world. He indulges in few rhapsodies and he cannot always sing like a seraph or pray like an apostle. But he supports the preacher, he keeps the church going, he gives to many charities, he is upright in business, he always pays his bills, he votes for clean men and measures, he tries to carry out even-handed justice and to observe the Golden Rule, he strives for temperance and purity in social life, for efficiency and honesty in political affairs, and he, somehow, feels that worthily “filling one’s station in life, in the fear of God, is a spiritual exercise.”

All this representation is deserving of respect and

can be said without any suspicion of contempt for or derision of the men and women of rapturous feeling and ecstatic visions. We do not seek to invalidate their title deeds to sainthood. We only ask that they open up their circle and let in their "practical" brother, give him the right hand of fellowship, and discern the nimbus as clearly around him as them. And, in his turn, we would that the "practical" brother might try to supplement his hard-headedness with something more of tender-heartedness, while his more meditative and introspective fellow Christian shall seek to add a larger actual efficiency in the doing of things for the Church and the community to his inner life.

The Rev. Dr. Allen, of London, has written these words to the young Christians beginning their following of Christ: "Many of us young Christians find it difficult to give to recreation its due, and no more than its due, proportion of time and thought; but there is a temptation far more subtle besetting some of us: worship is so apt to be crowded out by what we call 'service'; the multiplication of Christian activities is a standing menace to devotional habits; guard very jealously against letting personal experience of the things of God run shallow; your influence on others is bound to suffer; 'Man's busiest day's not worth God's minute.' Here, surely, is the open secret of a life that uses to the best advantage every day and hour. Only by the enthronement of Christ in the heart shall we learn to make and carry out the best program of life. The schoolroom may seem a chaos when the teacher is away, but how quickly every boy finds his place when the teacher returns! The disciples may dispute by the way

which of them shall be greatest, but when He stands among them they hold their peace. So let us seek 'first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things'—all this needed guidance as to life's duties—'shall be added unto' us."

The psalmist's brave and reverent prayer to Jehovah was:

Search me, O God, and know my heart:

Try me, and know my thoughts.

Has it not occurred to many that, seemingly, there is comparatively little heart-searching in these days of strenuousness, when there is not a quiet hour in the twenty-four for serious reflection? And to this generation, as it reads Bunyan in his "Holy War" or "Pilgrim's Progress," if it ever does, how strained must his feeling and language seem! We have learned to take religion more complacently, if not more lightly. As we read the biographies of Whitefield and of John and Charles Wesley, what intensity of spiritual apprehension and longing is there betrayed! The same thing may be said of the eminent divines of the Puritan period. How these men agonized after God and his salvation and peace! It is possibly true that, in some sense, their natures were unduly and unhealthfully exercised; but, on the other hand, do we not get along with the whole matter of our spiritual condition in altogether too comfortable a way? Sometimes it might seem that we are but too little concerned about it, are not at all anxious, and rather take it easily for granted that our place in the kingdom of heaven is so absolutely secure that we do not need to particularly trouble ourselves. Law's "Serious Call" is not popular reading. It may be feared that intensity of

feeling is too little ours; such intensity as Charles Wesley expresses:

If to the right or left I stray,
That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let me weep my life away
For having grieved thy love.

No true religion can end with repentance, though it must always begin with it. Regeneration must follow contrition. Learning to do well must come immediately after ceasing to do evil. The "Thou-shall-nots" of the Ten Commandments must be converted into the "Thou shalt" of Christ's law of love to God and neighbor. Renunciation of sin must lead to the energetic practice of virtue. Abstaining from every indulgence which can *not* be taken in the name of the Lord is not the whole of Christian practice—is but the preparation for active participation in everything which *can* be done in the name of the Lord. The best method of overcoming evil is by crowding it out with more vigorous goodness—by "the expulsive power of a new affection." The best tactics in resisting the devil is to passionately serve the Lord. The "doing without" of asceticism will not make fully developed sainthood. A holy character must be the product of aggressive effort. John's baptism with water was the symbol of the washing away of the sins he denounced. But One greater than he came after him, who baptized in the Holy Spirit and in fire. His baptism took the forgiven man and filled him with divine power, enthusiasm for truth and right, an ardor for all righteousness. This is the positive Christianity we must seek—a zeal and purposefulness to be something and do something for Christ and his brethren.

We once received a letter from a young lady in a certain college where she is pursuing one of the regularly prescribed courses of study in the Bible (a most interesting and profitable course it is too). She writes us: "We have been spending some time on the history of the kings of Israel and Judah. I like the prophets very well, but those old kings make me tired. They nearly all followed in the way of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, and it becomes slightly monotonous."

Yes, there is a dreadful monotony about sin. We thought of it one day when, taking up the daily paper, we saw the same old, thousand-times-repeated grist of stories about divorce, drunkenness, lust, and murder. Even suicide has become so frequent that people are bored in reading about the same old morphine, carbolic acid, or strychnine "route." There is a fearful sameness and tiresomeness about the records of "drunks," "assaults," and "hold-ups," and we should think the judges of the police courts would go mad with the daily recurrence of the same old list of "horribles."

Now, if one wants to do something original, something which has a flavor of individuality to it, let him make out a course of pure and noble daily conduct far above that of the average crowd, and then work to it day by day.

The fine lines of trees along the avenues of many of our cities are dying in large numbers, much to the regret of the citizens. Many causes are assigned: too close paving with flagstones and asphalt, so that moisture is prevented from reaching the roots; the poisoning of the soil by sewer gas and seepage; the influence of electric currents in wires of telegraph,

telephone, and traction systems; blighting by exhalations from manufactories of chemicals and similar compounds; the clogging of the pores of the leaves by layers of smoke and soft-coal soot. Perhaps all of these conspire together against the health and life of the tree.

In the spiritual realm our souls suffer for reasons which have their analogy to the above-mentioned injurious influences. The materialism of our age—making the surface of our spiritual susceptibilities as hard as the beaten and traveled wayside upon which the sower's seed fell in vain, preventing the dews and showers of grace percolating to the depths; the noxious vapors of sin—the social atmosphere surcharged with septic misasmas and toxic effluvias; the mephitic emanations of public and private vice; the currents of worldliness which shock and deaden; the stoppage and suffocation of the pores of the soul by the black deposits from the smokestacks of the nether pit—all these combine to destroy the vitality of the inner life.

On a certain Sunday we listened to a sweet-voiced singer as she beautifully rendered that fine old-time hymn, beginning,

Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee?
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glories shine through endless days?

As she sang the suggestion came to us that, at first thought, nothing could be remoter to-day, as a temptation, than to be ashamed of Jesus. For it is not with him now as it was when, in the days of his humiliation, he was comparatively unknown, accepted for no more than a Galilæan and a carpenter-

rabbi, preaching new and unwelcome doctrines, and arraigning the nation and the religious authorities for their sins. Then, when all the leaders, including the chief priests and the Pharisees, were against him, it might be distinctly unpopular as well as dangerous to take his side. The natural impulse might be, in any emergency, to disclaim him, Peter-like, and say, "I never knew him."

But all that has changed now. The true character and glory of Jesus are discerned and almost universally admitted. His nobility, the elevation of his teaching, his love for the race, his heroism and martyrdom—are not these the themes of eulogy, not only with professed Christians and orthodox believers, but with men of all stripes of belief? That man is regarded to-day as a freak, like the raving anarchist, who speaks of Jesus abusively or derisively. Whereas once it was popular to execrate him, it is now popular to venerate him. Even the unbelieving defamer of the Church will enwreath the name of Jesus with oratorical encomiums.

But it may be, even in such a time, Jesus may still have occasion to utter his warning—"If any man be ashamed of me and my words—" It is not a crown of thorns but a garland of roses that this age is pressing on his brow. And yet it is not pretty compliments, or high-flown flatteries, or brilliant "appreciations," or lavishment of word-painting in Ciceronian rhetoric that Jesus wants. To many who would thus bedeck him, he might well say: "Depart from me! I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity." His test is simpler and severer—"If ye love me, keep my commandments," "He that heareth these words of mine and doeth them." He cares more for

plain obedience than he does for the sacrifice of the lips in laudation. It is easy to praise and magnify Jesus, but harder, day by day, in things little and large—in the home, the office, business dealings, social relationships, civic duties—to keep to the strict letter of his teaching. If one is in what is called “society,” or in the ways of business and politics, it is even yet scarcely popular to adhere closely and uncompromisingly to Jesus’s prescriptions. It may be feared that too many of us, on occasions, by our deeds if not by our words, show that, even while we laud Jesus with our tongues, we are really ashamed of him.

What possibilities are there in the religion of Jesus that many of us have never yet sounded! What timid souls we are who dare not explore the land that lies before us! Weighed down by our imperfections, we hear Saint John declaring that “it is not yet made manifest what we shall be”; and, burdened with a sense that we have much spiritual territory yet to conquer—that we have not “already attained,” that we are not “already made perfect”—we see Saint Paul, in like case, “forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before,” pressing on “toward the goal.” Such glorious testimonies ought to hearten us wonderfully. They are the most keenly sensible of defects who perceive the grandeur of the Infinite Ideal—the goal of perfection in Christ.

It would be a poor life whose ideals were not evermore in advance of it. To the reflecting man two ideas are constantly enlarging before his mind—the mystery, the possibilities of his own being, and the inexhaustibility of the divine nature that forever

beckons him forward with the inspiring command, "Be perfect, as I am perfect." It is no wonder that the lofty ambition of so many souls expresses itself in the prayerful song, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." The more we know, the more we find there is to know; the more we experience, the more there is to experience. One of the best definitions of man is that he is a being of progress; not, like the bee, the spider, the beaver, forever repeating himself. The optimistic character of the Hebrew Scriptures, with its Golden Age, its Messianic kingdom, not in the past, but in some resplendent future, has made it the Sacred Book of all progressive nations. William von Humboldt writes: "Time is the wheel-track in which we roll on toward eternity, which conducts us to the Incomprehensible; there is a perfecting power connected with its progress, and this operates upon us the more beneficially when we duly estimate it, listen to its voice, and do not waste it, but regard it as the highest finite good in which all finite things are resolved."

It is well to recognize the irrevocable nature of our deeds. What we write we write. In the Book of Judgment no dotting of an "i," no crossing of a "t" is insignificant. Judas bewails in vain the awful fact that he has betrayed his Lord. Sometimes one act of folly will blast the reputation of a whole lifetime. To youth and manhood alike opportunities come. If they are not seized, they, at least, are lost forever, whatever other opportunities may come. Esau's exceeding bitter cry rings through the ages. If we neglect the supreme duties of life, "then the sad angels shall wail their miserere chant over us: 'Thou hast gambled with thy fate, played with thy oppor-

tunity, and now thy house is left unto thee desolate.' "

Nevertheless, while this solemn lesson is borne in on us, while life is granted us, there is chance of ever fresh endeavor. If we say, despairingly, that "it might have been" are the saddest "of all sad words of tongue or pen," we must still remember that always in the future "some sweet hope lies, deeply buried from human eyes." It is our noble prerogative to outgrow and forget the past and to live under the inspiration of the better time to come. All possible triumphs lie before us. God has given men indomitable spirits that are not to be crushed by a single failure or many. It is for us to pluck success from the very jaws of defeat.

But the backward look which becomes a habit unduly prolonged, a reflection on misspent days and wasted energies, is a species of debilitating misanthropy. To brood too constantly over the mistakes of life is to withdraw our powers from the actual work in hand. Sufficient, and not more than sufficient, unto each day are talent, vitality, and activity. We grow weak and disheartened if we are all the time taking our past poverty of achievement as a measure of our present or future possibilities. Had Paul fixed his mind, in some monomania, upon the events of his past—his part in the stoning of Stephen and in laying waste the Church, committing men and women to prison, breathing threatening and slaughter—he might have dragged out his life dismally enough and have fallen into a chronic state of morbidity. Or, had he dwelt too complacently on his triumphs, he might have rested in an easy self-satisfaction and simply marked

time without going forward. But, in his old age, after all of his missionary journeys, after all of his persecutions, trials, perils, and sufferings; after founding his churches and writing his epistles, after the unutterable revelations which came to him when caught up unto Paradise, we find him talking like the strenuous racer of "pressing on." He was evidently convinced that no man was immortal until he died. He believed that the work of faith would not be done till he obtained his crown. How many students, mechanics, and professional men achieve a certain mediocre excellence and then stop! They never outdo their first efforts, and they go on forever repeating themselves. How many there are whose experience in conversion was their high-water mark!

Saint Paul was a very ambitious man; but his ambition took a turn which must indeed seem peculiar, almost absurd, to those whose efforts are all concentrated on little more than money-getting. He conceived that God had designed him from his birth for some high office and destiny. God had arrested him on the road to Damascus to recall him to its pursuit. He could not realize all the magnitude and significance of this destiny, this call heavenward. He had not yet secured its full and perfected blessing. He was, however, constantly struggling toward a fuller and more intimate and personal knowledge of Christ and the spiritual interpretation of his death and resurrection. He would be conscious in his soul of their inspiration and power. He aspired to the "full-grown man—the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"—that degree of development of which to be found in Christ is the standard.

He felt that this implied constant growth, and that ceasing to grow meant stagnation and death. He knew that absolute perfection was a goal infinitely far off, and that God, in exhorting men to be perfect, even as he is perfect, had set before them an endeavor for all eternity. But, like the racer with tense muscles, inflated nostrils, head thrown back, every nerve stretching forward, he was not looking back over the course behind, but fixing his eyes on what lay in front—the winning-post and the prize—and bounding toward it.

To him life meant struggle—something more than a dream or an ecstasy. If one would enter in he must strive. Not to the idle, listless, apathetic should the spiritual rewards come, the doors of opportunity for influence be opened, the treasures of grace be uncovered, but only to those who ask, knock, and seek. The devil will flee only as he is resisted. Life must be dominated by a supreme purpose—its music controlled by a major chord. Interested in all the rich activities of existence, every man must, nevertheless, give himself to one work; not to riding a little hobby, but to carrying out the main end of his creation, to perfecting character, to blessing the world, even as Christ did. So Paul would not dwell on his past failures and sins—his old formality in religion, his wrath against and persecution of the Christians. He would redeem that evil past by intensity of good action in the present and future. His ambition, determination, and wisdom ought to be inspirational to us each. Our being made perfect is far in the distance. None of us yet realizes the full purpose and design of his being as it lay in the mind of the Father when he created him. Man here is only in his begin-

nings, the object even now in his imperfection and sin of the divine solicitude and care, but it doth not yet appear what he shall be. The scaffolding is not yet taken down from the building. The Infinite Artist has but made his preliminary sketch of man, and put a few colors on the palette. Man's ideals are always in advance of him, like the horizon that lifts as he goes toward it. The more he knows, the more he perceives there is to know. The larger the circle of light, the larger the circumference of the surrounding darkness. The better he grows, the vaster the moralities and spiritualities that stretch above him. Perfection is like space that, without bound or limit, paralyzes the imagination. "End there is none."

Two ideas are constantly enlarging in the vision of the spiritually-minded man—the conception of God and of himself. The most holy are those who are the most keenly sensible of their own defects, and who most clearly perceive the grandeur of what is still unattained. They thank God that he has put before them no finite, easily reached mark of development, but a "flying goal" ever ahead of them throughout the ages of ages—even the perfect nature of himself. They are filled with a Divine discontent. They are happy only as they are progressing. They do not expect to gain heaven at a single bound. But they are forever "toiling upward in the night."

Thinking of mistakes and failures disposes to despondency. But, while sad memories ought to warn and teach, they ought not to crush. Others have marred their lives, too—Jacob, Moses, David, Peter, and John—but they did not allow their old-time sins to forever blast their careers. The past was irrevoc-

cable. But, by repentance and faith, they made the years remaining atone for those misspent, and snatched victory out of the very jaws of defeat. Time may be worse than wasted in lamenting the waste of time. If early education has been neglected, it is folly to perpetually and idly bemoan the fact when every day offers its new chances of instruction. If one has not entered on the life of religious service, let him do it now. If there has been former failure to help others philanthropically or religiously, let the good work be begun, were it even in the last year of life. "And shall we ever live at this poor dying rate?" No! a thousand times, no! Let the higher life go on at a better rate from this very day. "The strenuous life" is good, but not simply in business. The identical tremendous earnestness, directness, and forth-rightness that are put into daily work should be poured into religion.

Doubtless the confession of the Prayer Book is true of all of us: "We have done those things we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things we ought to have done." In the language of the Sunday school hymn, the mistakes of our lives have been many, and the sins of our lives have been more. Yet the healthy, bracing spirit of Christianity is seen in that sorrow and contrition work for life. Repentant, forgiven, laying aside every weight, a man may leave his sins and his lamentable nonperformance all behind him, and, with lightened heart and quickened conscience and perfected trust, leap into some glorious work for the Master.

If our religion is not a growth, it is a stagnation. A modern scientist has given us a scientific fact when he says: "It is the law of nature that he who will not

work must rot; that he who will not strive will be enslaved; that he who will not seek increase shall impersonate the horror of degradation." When a tree in the forest becomes bark-bound, underneath the bark may be found all manner of vermin. Some lives are like Nebraskan rivers—drained off in the arid wastes. Others narrow themselves to form a deeper current. Jesus was no "Galilæan dreamer." No man in New York or Chicago to-day is more intense, practical, and efficient than was he. Glorious strife is forever preferable to ignominious inactivity. Every existence, if it would be engrandized, must have in it a supreme purposefulness and idealistic endeavor.

And were this life the utmost span,
The only end and aim of man,
Better the toil of fields like these
Than waking dream and slothful ease.

Life must be something more than an ecstasy. It must be a struggle, a warfare. Whatever our spiritual attainments may have been, there is infinitely more to be experienced yet. It is with the soul-life as with the sea. We cannot take in the whole expanse of the ocean with the sweep of our eye:

Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound
Unto the farthest flood-brine look with me—
Then reach on with thy thought till it be drowned.
Miles and miles distant though the last line be,
And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond—
Still, leagues beyond these leagues, there is more sea.

The heroic and venturesome spirit of an Ulysses we must transfer to our spiritual explorations. Those splendid lines of Tennyson which strive to interpret the undaunted mood of the old navigator

ought to be ours as we contemplate the possibilities of Christian experience:

Much have I seen and known: cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, government,

Yet all experience is an arch where-through
Gleams that untraveled world, whose margin fades
Forever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As though to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note may yet be done
Not unbecoming men who strive with gods.

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are,
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

CHAPTER VII

POWER FOR THE LIFE OF SERVICE

AT one time there was a decided tendency on the part of critics of Christianity to dispose of the phenomena of Christian experience with a contemptuous sneer against "superstition." That attitude has been abandoned for the most part. It was perceived that it was, to say the least, utterly unscientific. It is the province of science to discover, observe, and collate facts everywhere, and arrive at the underlying philosophy and explanation. No facts, it was admitted, which existed anywhere could be ignored. To sneer at a fact was a piece of absurdity. If one would be a loyal follower of Bacon, and a scientist in deed and in truth in whom there is no guile, he must candidly and faithfully face the evidence for every fact in the universe. He must not allow his prejudices, or any general scheme of preconceived theories, to obscure his vision or afflict him with any mental strabismus whatever. Even if he thinks there are peculiar difficulties in the way of accepting miracles and the supernatural works and contentions of Christianity, he must not, as he, a scientific man, values the clear-sightedness and candor without which he cannot discern nor interpret the great facts of the universe, try to dispose of them with a sniff and an interrogation point. He must not stop his ears to the testimony of thousands and thousands of people through many generations as to the validity of the claims of Christ and his religion.

Now, Christianity, on its historical side, is pre-eminently a faith founded on facts of a superlative degree of importance. It is not based on mere philosophic speculations and abstractions. And, on its practical side, it is a religion of experience. Saint John declares that he makes known simply what he had seen and heard and known of the Word of Life. And the same note of reality sounds forth from the lips of the confessors of all the Christian centuries:

What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell,
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.

Such a mass of testimony cannot be whistled down the wind. It would have to be admitted before any court as first-hand evidence, and it is one of the things which must be investigated by the "laboratory method." There has been a disposition on the part of some professors of the mathematical and material sciences to laugh theology out of court as being no science at all, in any true sense, but only a mass of conjectures and speculations and purely metaphysical reasonings, resting on unproved assumptions. But it is now seen that that view can no longer be held. Theology is a true science and is built as much upon a solid substratum of facts as is the science of biology or geology. The facts of the spiritual realm are as evident, real, palpable, and incontrovertible as are those of the material realm. Are stars and strata, and fossils and protoplasms and brain-cells and blood corpuscles facts? So are God and Christ and the Bible and the soul and salvation and moral character and spiritual perception, vision, idealism, and attainment in holiness—all, all

indisputable and irrefutable facts which science must reckon with, explain if she can, but not explain away.

It is the holy character which is the best disproof of all naturalistic theories. Against true holiness in heart and life there can be no successful argument waged. There is no higher ideal of Christian attainment which can possibly be imagined than to be entirely sanctified, and this ideal must never be allowed to drop out of sight and be forgotten. Theologians, preachers, evangelists, and various types of believers may differ as to the means and ways, the manner and time of becoming sanctified. Differing conceptions of what sanctification is in itself have prevailed. Sometimes controversy upon even such a high and holy theme as this has become acrimonious and the Church has been divided and embittered by the strife. Of all themes upon which men, who may avow the possession of this supreme grace, or declare that they are earnestly seeking it, should grow wrathful and intolerantly disputatious, this would seem to be the last. But controversy must not be allowed to drive out from the Church or from the minds of Christians either the name of sanctification, or holiness, or the grace itself. It behooves, moreover, those who claim to have been specially blessed, to give evidence of it in the larger beauty and serviceableness of their lives, especially in their complete devotion to their church life. The pastor and their fellow members ought to find in them the most willing coöperation, liberality, joyous participation in every good work.

We are glad to think that this frequently happens, but we have known cases of the opposite kind. We

call to mind a good, hard-working brother of average intelligence and fine Christian development. His prayers were spiritual, his testimonies modest and helpful. But, returning one summer from a camp meeting in a distant State, it was our surprise to find that the new and remarkable religious experience of which he boasted had turned him into a censor and berater of his brethren and a general scold. He was the only one who was in the right condition and everybody else was wrong! All of his old-time sweetness was gone and he made himself intolerably disagreeable by his splenetic religiousness and vituperative piety. All his good, as far as that church was concerned, was spoiled, and it was a pity. He seemed set in his egoistic consciousness of superiority.

On the other hand, we have known those who professed to be sanctified, and showed forth such gentleness, loveliness, and self-control, and were so useful in all Christian labor, that no one ever questioned their sanctification nor cared to challenge their theories. Our religion must be deep-rooted. Before it can be made of the highest service to the world we must "take time to be holy." Christianity is a grand system of renovation. Its Christ proclaims, "Behold, I make all things new." Its disciples have a new name written upon the white stone given them. They are to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. They are to walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit. There is to be a new humanity which is to put on the new man that, after God, has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth—the new man that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him who created him. For neither circum-

cision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. The old leaven must be purged out that there may be a lump leavened with the new leaven.

There are to be new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The former things shall not be remembered nor come into mind. The Holy City, New Jerusalem, has come down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. "Into this holy city we have come. In dark hours a light is always shining upon us; in our weakness and insecurity a 'wall great and high' protects us. In our poverty and helplessness we receive the assurance of angel watchers and fellowship with the Church from the beginning of the world."

There is to be the constant revelation of new truth. The new wine is to be put into new bottles. A new commandment the Master gives us. We enter into the holy place by a new and living way. Christ is the Mediator of a new covenant. A new spirit will be put within us, and the redeemed sing this wonderful new song unto Him who is the unfold and director of the destinies of men throughout all the unknown future: "Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests."

There are three very searching questions which Methodist bishops ask of the preachers seeking admission into the Conferences in full connection. They are these: "Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this

life? Are you earnestly striving after it?" Each bishop is careful to explain that the perfection here spoken of is not to be taken in an absolute sense, as implying freedom from all errors of judgment and a state of entire sinlessness, but in the specific and limited sense of its own phraseology—"perfect in love." And unless we are to think that certain forms of evil must necessarily become chronic in the human soul, to look forward to having the mind freed from hatreds, grudges, suspicions, unworthy imputations; to anticipate having it filled with benevolence, sympathy, cordial regard and love for others, is certainly not an unreasonable prospect. And, reasonable as it is, such an ideal is, beyond question, abundantly worth "striving after" with all the persistence of one's consecrated powers. The flying goal must be persistently pursued.

And this is not only an ideal for ministers. Why for them alone? Its magnetism ought to be felt by the laity as well. It is a conception that ought to have great attractiveness and stimulation for all Christian people. It ought to catch their thought and hold their vision and faith up to its great possibilities. Everyone should be able to answer positively in the affirmative to those great questions: "Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you earnestly striving after it?"

"It is time," say the directors of the American Society of Religious Education, "to cease the doubting and the quibbling in which some have indulged, and to learn how the Bible may be most effectively used in winning souls to Christ, in promoting a higher type of piety in the churches, and in overcoming the vice and crime so common among us; these

questions are paramount, they can be answered only by devout and scholarly men who believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners." Christ said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Some of the utterances of Gladstone, Arnold, Simpson, and Finney are worth pondering over now:

"We talk about questions of the hour. There is but one question—how to bring the truths of God's Word into vital contact with the mind and heart of all classes of the people."

"To give a man education is to make him love God, to have faith in Christ, and to open his heart to every impulse of the Holy Spirit."

"You may store the mind with Bible truths, but they will be of comparatively little worth until vitalized by the Holy Spirit."

"The Word of God came by the Spirit of God through holy men. It may be interpreted only by the Spirit to men who seek to be holy."

The imitation of Jesus is mainly a practical thing. The life of devotion and obedience to him need not be involved with abstruse and perplexing questions in metaphysical theology. Who he was and what he was in the depths of his nature, the world, after two thousand years of investigation, has not been able to tell exhaustively. If anyone shall say that it is too much of a mystery to believe in such a birth, such a life, such a resurrection, a sufficient reply is that the universe is crowded with mystery. We cannot explain creation, or existence, or matter, or mind, or life—nothing, indeed, ultimately. We cannot prove by reason apart from faith who we are ourselves, what we are, whence we came, whither we go. What

is the meaning of the worlds and the totality of things, who can say? Even the "flower in the cran-nied wall" defies all our systems of thought.

We cannot understand Jesus fully and fundamentally, nor explain him as we explain others. He does not ask us to do it, nor make our salvation depend on our doing it. Jesus says not "Explain me," but "Follow me." His religion is conduct—a practical program and not a merely philosophical disquisition. Its path into truth is by way of obedience. He that is willing to do the will of God and honestly makes the attempt shall, somehow, comprehend the teaching of the Prophet of Nazareth.

Professor John M. Tyler was once discussing the kind of ministers the Church needs. He declared that "it is Great Heart, not Swelled Head, who kills Giant Despair." He represented the tired worshiper in the pew, worn with the temptations and struggles of the week, as saying to his minister: "We do not come to you each Sabbath morning primarily or chiefly to hear your opinions on art or literature, science or philosophy. We ask you: Is God on the field? Will he help me? Have you any order from headquarters, and word of warning or encouragement, of uplift and inspiration, from him? What we want and must have is, as the old Puritan said, 'the best of all courages, a beam from the Almighty.' Can you give it to us? Have you any message beginning with 'Thus saith the Lord'? We do not care much for anybody's opinions or hypotheses; academic questions do not interest us; even culture is not of chief importance. We are hungry for facts about our relation to God and his kingdom, to our own life, and to our fellow men. To these we

will listen. Every man and woman in this world is in a life-and-death grapple with sin and with the misery bred of sin. We feel the bitterness of the struggle and know that we can enter heaven only on our shields. Can you help us?"

We have all heard about the good German who was being examined by the preacher and elders before being admitted to the Church. He was asked about regeneration, atonement, inspiration, foreordination, and many another theological conception and definition. He listened to the interrogations in hopeless perplexity and could return no answer. He seemed incomprehensibly dull and too unintelligent to be called a Christian believer. At last the kind-hearted preacher said in his despair, "I will ask one more simple question and we will see if we can get a reply at last." And, turning to the bewildered brother, he said, "Tell us now, do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?" Instantly the worthy German's face underwent a wonderful transformation. It changed from stupidity to light and intelligence, as he joyfully exclaimed: "Ach! yah! yah! Ich liebe mein Jesus! Ich leibe mein Jesus!" To the credit of the examiners it was pronounced sufficient and he was admitted.

We were reminded of this incident when reading some delightful sketches in a little volume of short stories called "Dwellers in the Mist." The author, Norman Maclean, has much of Ian Maclaren's faculty of transfiguring common life with pathos. The stories, laid among the Scotch folk of the Hebrides, turn largely upon the rigidity of their stiff Calvinistic creed. Their minister, Dr. Macleod, had sacrificed everything to give himself to them. He was

a man of rare scholarship, piety, and preaching ability, but he did not care to waste his time and degrade his pulpit by entering on useless theological controversies. Consequently, the stricter sort concluded that "he was not sound." "What right had he to introduce any poetry save the holy psalms into the pulpit?" One of his elders accused him of not believing in the doctrine of election. "It is long since I waited to hear you preach on it, but never a word you uttered. This was the truth on which we were nurtured, and I tell you the people will not endure it unless you speak out on the evils of the day."

So they abandoned him in a body and left him to his bare church walls. They could not deny that he was the soul of gentleness and kindness—ministering to the sick and dying, comforting the afflicted, loaning money, nursing the plague-stricken? "But," they obstinately argued, "what is the good of a man being kind when he is unsound in the vital principles of the faith? What is the good of his being kind when he has proved a traitor to the truth, and has shown himself in his true character as a false prophet?"

One poor old lady came before this ultra-orthodox session to be catechized before being admitted to the yearly communion—a rite made so dreadful that of two thousand worshipers only thirty souls ventured to go forward to the table. "You know," said Eachann Donn, who was the spokesman of his fellow elders, "that our rule is that the communicants must know their Catechism. Now, tell us, what is God?" "God is love; God is my Father," she answered. "But that is not the answer in the Catechism, and

that is what we want," said Eachann. "What is justification by faith?" "I know only," she answered, "that I trust wholly in the Lord Jesus and that I love him."

So Eachann went on with his questions, and Mairi answered in her own way, but "not according to the book," and, consequently, she was rejected until she should "get some one to teach her the Catechism."

Then she rose to go out. At the door she turned and said, "Eachann Donn, you can shut me out from the communion, but, thank God, you cannot shut me out of heaven!"

The old lady died shortly after, with the words whispered to her, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," to which she murmured in reply, "He will not shut me out." For he had said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

But with all the simplicity that there is in the religion of Christ, its true inwardness cannot be known without a definite surrender and a sustained culture. Edward Everett Hale, Jr., professor of English in Union College, and son of the distinguished Unitarian preacher, Edward Everett Hale, whose conversion was brought about by the preaching of Dr. W. J. Dawson, has made a confession of his faith and given a recital of the steps that led to it, which, we think, will best illustrate what we mean by this "surrender." He was led to self-examination and prayer by the sermons of Dr. Dawson, and the change that came to him is evidently to be accounted for on no other basis but the work of the Spirit in his heart. His concern for art, literature, and nature was subordinated to a greater love for others. He came to the conviction, he said, that he

was a sinner, and resolved to surrender and take up the spiritual ministry of Christ. The call of the cross, he saw, is not merely a call to forgiveness, but a call to love and work for Christ. He claims that he knows by personal experience that the way of the cross is through prayer, and this quotation from his address will be read with supreme interest: "The call of Christ I conceive to be that time in a man's life when an impulse comes to surrender everything for Christ. We all come to a place in our lives when we feel that there is something lacking in our life, and Christ speaks to us in that still small voice, and if we accept him, he brings us into the new life. That is what is meant by hearing the call and giving ourselves to Christ. Personally I had no expectation that the call of Christ would come to me. I think most of you here who know me personally will agree with me that I was not the man you would have expected to confess Christ here in this meeting-house. If you will pardon these personal references, I will give a few reasons why. I am of New England birth and a New Englander is not apt to be carried away by anything emotional. I am a man of books, of an intellectual life, associated constantly with students, and such men do not take such steps under enthusiasm. Most of you are aware of the fact that I was a Unitarian and that they are known as a sect which lays more stress on reason and intellect than on the heart. Who would have thought that I would have been led to accept Christ in a revival meeting in a Methodist church?"

His students speak of Professor Hale's new sympathy for and interest in them. On "watch night" he was in the altar, at the altar service, joining in

prayer for the "seekers" and thoroughly enjoying the opportunity.

The early Christian fathers had a most significant saying, "*Aut Christus aut nihil*"—"Either Christ or nothing." It answered to the modern motto, "Out-and-out for Jesus." A youth may think he can balance the claims of the world and of Christ and steer successfully a convenient middle course. But that is because he has not yet put himself decidedly into either current. The two streams may seem to run parallel for a little way, but in middle life they will have diverged widely. No man can serve two masters; but one master he is bound to serve. It is the foolishness of delusions for men to think they can stand in between Christ and the world, and nicely adjust their respective demands upon them, to the detriment of neither and the satisfaction of both. Inevitably they shall own their allegiance, in a very short time to one or the other. And those nominal Christians and easy-going church members, who think they can get along comfortably on the terms of some such complacent compromise, will end by being more and more nominal and artificial in their Christian life, and more and more actual and natural in their unreligious worldliness. "*Aut Christus aut nihil.*"

In some countries it is the lion or the tiger which is the chief foe to human life and there seems to be some dignity and glory in warring against him. But it may be doubted whether lions, tigers, wild elephants, crocodiles or boa constrictors ever did as much damage as the Lilliputians at the other end of creation's scale. The infinitesimal microbes, whose presence in the human system brings typhoid or scar-

let fever, diphtheria or lockjaw, are monsters much more to be dreaded. Just now most of the evils of malaria are being laid to mosquitoes and flies and the edict for their extermination has gone forth. Conventions are called to consider how best to annihilate the pestiferous little boll-weevil, which is destroying cotton crops by wholesale. And then there are the plagues of the chinch bugs, of the white ants, of the Hessian flies, of the army worms, of the locusts, of the teredos, of the potato bugs, of the San José scale, and many others. It is the insignificant and microscopical hordes that threaten the citadels of life most alarmingly.

It is so, likewise, in the spiritual realm. We are not slain by leviathans and behemoths, and the sustenance for our best being is not cut off from us by the ravages of leonine temptations and elephantine sins. It is the little foxes that destroy the vineyards. It is the seemingly contemptible, almost unheeded and unworthy of notice, minute and petty sins and defections from duty that bring disease and death into the soul—that destroy the spirit's fairest harvests. Their ruin can be stayed only by the anti-septics and antitoxins of grace.

Once, after a prolonged period of effort in which extra engagements piled themselves onto regular work, we had to consult a specialist. Stomach and liver were certainly behaving in anything but a nice way. Well, what did the specialist direct? Only what we knew very well before, and had heard a score of times—carefulness as to diet, plenty of sleep, fresh air, sunshine, and the absolute necessity of regular exercise. "But, Doctor," we expostulated, "you are laying down an impractical program.

It is impossible to follow it out. Where can we find time for so much exercise? It's entirely out of the question."

The doctor calmly looked at us and said: "You must make the time. You say you cannot, but you must. Other things must be given up if it comes to that. Where the necessity for a thing imperatively exists, there is no alternative. If you want to live and be well, you must exercise." And we couldn't get him to alter his prescription. He simply said: "You must, and that's all there is to it." We are convinced that he is absolutely right, even when we find it the hardest to follow out the advice.

But we fell to thinking that this same advice might well be given to men so absorbed in the rushing business of to-day that they feel that they can give no attention to their soul-interests. Just as no man can neglect his health and the proper care of his body with impunity, just as he cannot escape disease unless he bathes, eats rationally, sleeps and exercises sufficiently, just so he cannot go on utterly forgetful of all the needs of his immortal soul, and not pay the natural penalty in the derangement of his best and highest life. He may protest, with full and frank earnestness, that what his pastor tells him is an impossible program. He may allow that he knows he ought to do it and yet allege that it is utterly precluded in such a busy life as his. But the answer to him is the same as the physician gave to us. There is no option in the matter. Time must be simply and resolutely taken and set apart for definite spiritual ends. The soul must really have some attention paid to it; must get its proper nourishment; must have its quiet hours for reflection, prayer, and wor-

ship; must be exercised in godliness. Otherwise there are inevitable troubles ahead. Over against every excuse of "I can't" stands the dogmatic and uncompromising "You must!"

Sometimes, while seated in a passenger coach waiting for the train to start, who has not been treated to a puzzling deception by thinking his train in a backward motion when, in fact, a train on an adjoining track has started slowly forward? At such times it is quite impossible to disillusionize oneself, and not without casting his gaze to the opposite window can it be done successfully.

There is a spiritual analogy just here, and although it would not be proper to say that we were going backward merely because the neighboring train was passing us, we wish to make the point that failure to advance in the Christian life is practically "backsliding"; and although it is mere imagination in the matter of the trains, it is a grievous fact in the higher realm. The usual conception of a "backslider" is of one who actually falls from grace, who turns his back upon Christ and betakes himself down the road of sin. But we think the same result, practically speaking, will be attained by merely failing to advance. Truth is ever on the march; ideas are growing; the experiences of the world and the individual believer are constantly enlarging, and he who is not marching abreast of the on-moving procession is not only seemingly, but in the most real sense, "losing out." Many who bear the name Christian, and would expostulate if otherwise classed, are unconsciously deteriorating by this unwillingness to step up. And there they are, slowly, but surely, bankrupting, because they are disinclined to invest

what God gave them at conversion. We are to occupy until he comes; we are to be up and doing every day; we have got to advance.

For an hour or more, one day, the piano in our home kept repeating and repeating the same refrain, until, by constant repetition, it seemed to din itself into our brain as if it would stay there forever. The young lady was at her morning "practice." She was painstaking and conscientious, and she kept at the appointed task faithfully, assiduously drumming out the few ever-recurring bars. She had not been "taking" very long, consequently the "piece" was of the simpler order. And we noted again and again the same hesitancies over certain notes, but there was just a little improvement each time. However, we do not wonder that youthful pupils often protest against the "grind" of the task, and express themselves vigorously to the effect that they "just hate practicing." Nevertheless, there has been no other way recently discovered by which, leaving out the drudgery, one may become a musician. Our young lady must keep at her "sonatinas" until the keys almost play themselves, despite monotony and weariness.

Our lives are like the keyboards before which we must sit, hour after hour, through the years, trying to play the score which the Great Teacher has set us. Over and over and over again we have to do our "practicing" on the same task or very similar ones. We go on blundering at the same places until, at last, we get over the difficulties and can pass on to something new and a little finer and harder. Often we rebel against the sameness and repetitiousness of our work, which, to our thinking, has so little in it

that it would hardly seem worth doing at all. But still we have to keep at it, and are not excused until our performance is pronounced so satisfactory that we can be advanced. So we go from one assignment to another, taking on constantly increasing responsibilities and obligations of larger dimensions. And at the end of life there will come, in some other world, let us hope, selections of grander and yet grander music for us to master. But there is no way that we know by which the exercises can be skipped and we yet become skilled musicians at the keyboard of life. We must stick to our "pieces" until we have thoroughly learned them. Chief of all our acquisitions must be the possession of a pure heart of sincere love and the "mind that was in Christ."

Some one has said that the chief "heresy" known in the Bible is blacksliding and wickedness. It is very suggestive. To our own thinking the worst heresy is not that of the head, but of the heart—not in tangled-up thinking, but in the wrong tempers of the soul. The worst heresy in regard to Christ is not Docetism, Arianism, Sabellianism, or any such allied "ism," but the malignant disposition of an unloving heart. The error of the mind may coexist with a pure life and a sincere conscience; it may even prove not to be an error at all, but an anticipation of a truth that future generations will recognize. But the evil condition and inclination of the heart is a vital departure from the faith.

The real Antichrist, who is the "liar," as Saint John says, and "denieth that Jesus is the Christ," and "confesseth not Jesus," is not some argumentative Socinian, or theoretical atheist, or metaphysical agnostic, but the man with hate in his breast instead

of love. For the confession of Christ does not lie fundamentally in creeds and orthodoxies, but in a life which responds to the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and which manifests itself in good Samaritanism. The sum total of orthodoxy, according to Christ, the summing up of "the law and the prophets," is love to God and love to man, or, since both grow from one root, simply love. To be without love, to harbor malicious and hateful feelings and sentiments toward others, to speak the bitter word, or to write the mean, sarcastic, revengeful letter—this is to deny Christ. The denial of the divinity of Jesus by the lips of some Unitarian, who, like Channing, Emerson, or Martineau, may be leading conspicuously a beautiful, spiritual life—what is that in comparison with the practical denial of Christ in the character and acts of the backbiter, the scorner and detractor of men, the whisperer, the scandal-monger, the venomous human viper with poison in his tongue?

To say this is not to imply that the differences between evangelical faith and rationalistic conceptions are matters of small import and amount to little or nothing. It is not to be interpreted, even incidentally, as an apology for speculative heterodoxy. But it is to insist that the most real, essential confession of him, of which Christ speaks, is not with the mouth merely, not in the repetition of any Nicene or Athanasian creeds, but in the possession of a heart of charity—of a life filled with love and therein having the best evidence that there has been a passing "out of death into life."

It will do us all good to read again and again the searching words of Saint John, the most intimate

revealer of the deepest thought of Jesus. Does he dwell, as a proof of heresy, mostly on warped and erroneous intellectualism in the sphere of theology? Hear this: "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. . . . He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked. . . . He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light. . . . In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. . . . Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. . . . He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

And Jesus himself spoke some words that go to the very root of all religion and bear directly on this discussion: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Have there been very many in the history of the world who have persecuted so-called schismatics for heresy who were ever entirely free from the imputation of anger, malignity, personal feeling, and hatred? All the worst attributes of humanity have been exhibited in such controversies. Historians tell us that it is difficult to conceive how the passions of

mankind could be roused to such fury as they were over the questions debated in the Council of Nicæa. Thus did holy men endeavor to exterminate heresy and arrive at the truth.

It is a curious, but still pertinent question to ask which was the greater sinner—Servetus, who denied the doctrine of the Trinity, or Calvin, who instigated his arrest, condemnation, and burning at the stake. It is a pity that there could not have been some executions at the stake, in order to even things up, of men flagrantly guilty of heresy of the heart. A recent writer on the Inquisition in Spain tells us about the character of the higher ecclesiastics and lower clergy—men stained by licentiousness and every lawless passion, dissolute, ignorant, fighting duels and committing perjuries and homicides. “The ecclesiastical body,” he says, “was wholly secularized, and only to be distinguished from the laity by the sacred functions which rendered its vices more abhorrent, by the immunities which fostered and stimulated those vices, and by the intolerance which, blind to all aberrations of morals, proclaimed the stake to be the only fitting punishment for aberration in the faith; while powerless to reform itself, it yet had influence enough to educate the people up to its standard of orthodoxy in the ruthless persecution of all whom it pleased to designate as enemies of Christ.”

But that spirit did not die with the Inquisition. There are some modern heresy hunters who, though they may not be open to such charges against the purity of their lives, are still under condemnation for the personal and persecuting tempers that they carry into their crusades. Every church contains evi-

'dence of this fearful incongruity. There have been known ministers of our own time who, with reference to those from whom they disagreed theologically, could express themselves most uncharitably and censoriously, and who, on occasion, could write the most vitriolic epistles concerning those whom they accused as "enemies of the Bible" and of the true religion. They called their mean passion "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and, perfectly certain that their "doxy" was orthodoxy, arrogantly arraigned all dissenters before their judgment seat of wrath. Doubtless heretics must be dealt with, particularly if they go into the business of sowing dissension by inveighing against the doctrines of the Church to whose tenets they have subscribed, but he who brings the charges must examine himself scrupulously as to purity of intention and Christlikeness of disposition.

We have known very earnest church members who, letting their "angry passions rise," and becoming personal and bitter in their zeal to prosecute others for card-playing, theater-going, and dancing, were utterly oblivious that they themselves came into condemnation by the same provision of their Church's Discipline which, under the general head of "imprudent and unchristian conduct," prohibits "indulging in sinful tempers or words," as well as "taking such amusements as are obviously of misleading or questionable moral tendency."

Theologians tell us that the Satan of Job was not the vulgar horned and split-hoof imp of mediæval times. He mingled freely with the sons of God, but he was the Celestial Cynic and chronic Critic and Kicker—the *Diabolos*—the "hurler against," as the

etymology implies, the one who "thrust through," defamed, or "informed against"—the calumniator and slanderer, the "accuser of his brethren." And that is the very meanest kind of a business that anyone in the whole universe can engage in. The devil is the Great Heretic, and, unfortunately, he is leading vast numbers astray into his supreme heresy and heterodoxy, and the vast pity of it is that many of them are imagining all the while that they are the very pillars and exemplars of orthodoxy. Therefore our contention for the pure heart of love is not in vain. Having that, there must be the element of strenuosity brought prominently into the religious life.

If anyone thinks it is quite profane in us to take any parables from the athletic world, we must refer him to Brother Paul, who did not scruple, once and again, to find illustrations in the footraces and boxing matches of this time. If he were living now, we think he might discover some useful parallel in all the athletic contests prevalent, that he might apply to earnestness in religion. If he were an American living to-day, we imagine he would not scruple to rejoice over the contests of the university track and field teams. He would hold up the discipline, dash, and pluck of those athletes as a good thing to emulate in our religious life.

Of a certain college boat race it was said that the losing crews were well trained, and they rowed scientifically enough, but they lacked "ginger," "snap," "go." They had stroke, watermanship, but training, form, and all that could not compete against training and form with a "plus" to it—a something more, a vital dynamic. As one writer describes it:

"This fourth dimension—call it 'snap,' 'vim,' 'life,' or what you will—cannot be trained into a crew which does not possess it temperamentally any more than you can train ten-second 'speed' into a man who is not a born sprinter."

It is so in all life, religious and other. Mere machine perfection in morals and virtue will never produce such results as definite training plus inner life, inspiration, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of power. And this strenuous religion must have its exhibition and vindication in everyday living and acting. Jesus never had any set of ideas labeled "religious." Religion was for him a life. To him the religious and the secular were one. To bring God into everyday life makes every day a sacred day and every life a divine life. We are all longing for big arenas for action, and regretting, Naamanlike, that we are not told to "do some great thing." The "trivial round, the common task," seem to us altogether too trivial and common. Men in the past imagined they must come before Jehovah with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil, and their first-born sons for sacrifice. They, and we too, have difficulty in realizing how simple is the divine prescription and requirement: "to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God."

It is said that Jesus was an idealist, living in the invisible world with his Father. But, as a youth, after his heart had been strangely stirred in the temple, he went back to be obedient to his parents, and to the work of the carpenter shop. From a brief stay in the Mount of Transfiguration he and his disciples return to take up their usual ministrations to the afflicted and their regular teaching. Paul was

in the third heaven for an ecstatic hour or two, but his ordinary labors on his missionary tours consumed most of his time. Some of the early Christians courted martyrdom. But Christ avoided death as long as he was able, and, when he came to die, he died simply, without adding grandiose or spectacular features, praying for his enemies, talking to a robber, comforting his mother, confessing that he was thirsty, commending himself briefly to his Father. After the awful crucifixion itself, Peter, in sensible fashion, said, "I go a-fishing."

In conversion, there may be transports, yet, afterward, life will have to go on in commonplace ways and with the usual duties. We will not probably be called upon to die for Christ. No such dramatic tests will come to us. Our consecration must find its field, not in ecstasies, but in everyday living in the household, in business, in social intercourse. We must read carefully "The Vision of Sir Launfal," and mark its deep lesson. Few of us can imitate the heroes of missions—Carey, Judson, Taylor, Thoburn—but in our own local circles we can offer our little toward the world's evangelization. Few can preach like Paul, Savonarola, Beecher, Spurgeon, Brooks, Parker, but each can do his work faithfully and speak his honest word of faith. To few will come such an opportunity as came to Luther, the reformer, but all can strive for the betterment of their local communities and contend for pure morals in society and spirituality in the Church. Not every man can be a Parkhurst in New York, but he can be a good citizen in his village. If one may not be a supreme court judge—a Marshall, a Story, or a Chase—he may perchance be a good police judge.

If he may not be a Grant or Lee, he may be a brave private soldier, dying for his country, seeking neither fame nor place. If one may not be a Jenner, a Pasteur, or a Koch, he may be a faithful country doctor. If one may not be a Florence Nightingale or a Clara Barton, she may be equally heroic as an inconspicuous deaconess or hospital nurse. If one may not be an Esther, a Joan of Arc, a Catharine, an Elizabeth, or a Victoria, she may be a loving and patient mother, bearing the petty vexations, neither scolding nor fretting, ministering to the little wants of small children, making the home a paradise for them and her husband.

If one cannot be a president or even a presidential candidate, he can go to the polls and cast a conscientious vote, though there be nothing melodramatic in it. If one cannot be a great educator—an Arnold, a Hopkins, a McCosh, a Mary Lyon, or an Alice Freeman—he or she can be a teacher in the public schools, doing unnoticed but indispensable work. And public school scholars can serve Christ by studiousness and order, by supporting discipline, by pleasing both teachers and parents. We do not need to go to Thermopylæ, or Marathon, or Waterloo, or Gettysburg for examples of faithfulness and valor. Every day railroad engineers, foremen, policemen, foundrymen, workers in the slums, wives in poverty-stricken homes show equal heroism.

We want a working religion and a workaday religion—a religion which is for the forge, the furnace, the machine room, the roundhouse, the salt pits, the coal mine, the office building, and the kitchen; which does not dwell on the heights but on the lowlands; which is not for intellectual and spiritual giants, but

just for common people; which makes men "faithful over a few things"; which is not something for Sunday dress parade alone, or mere pious decency and respectability; not an appendage to life, but life itself. We want a faith that will make faithful; a religion that will make men attentive to the minor morals—courteous, cheerful, and sowing sunshine, showing kindness and doing little favors, being considerate in speech and without cynicism or gossip, keeping their temper, being prompt in engagements. We want a religion that will pay debts; that will practice honesty in business life; that will treat employees with justice and consideration; that will render employers full and faithful work without grudging or scamping; that will keep bank cashiers true; office holders patriotic and reliable; citizens interested in the purity of politics and the noblest ideals of the country; husbands and wives in love with each other all the time; children obedient to parents; brothers and sisters manifesting in the home gentleness and mutual self-sacrifice for each other; young men pure, clean-mouthed, self-controlled; capitalists and laborers respecting and loving each other as men. Such a religion is real, vital, effective. It is the religion of the Christ who demands mercy rather than sacrifice.

The hymn of Maltbie Babcock,

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;

We have hard work to do and loads to lift.

Shun not the struggle, face it, 'tis God's gift,

is sure to be more and more popular with the passing days. It is very inspiring to hear a congregation of men sing those robust lines of "Faith of our fath-

ers''; and when they proclaim in song, "We will be true to thee till death," and referring to "the fathers," they declare

"How sweet would be their children's fate,
If they, like them, could die for thee!"

who shall accuse them of simply indulging in weak sentimentality? Is there not a soldierly Christian virtue which exists to-day as certainly as it ever existed before, and which would prove as valiant in defense of the faith, or in suffering for, it as ever the fathers were?

We once heard Doctor van Dyke preach a sermon before the students of Yale University on "The Things Worth While," and at the conclusion those hundreds of young men, with their deep voices, rolled out that magnificent hymn, "A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify." And when they came to the second verse, and sang,

"To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O, may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will!"

it seemed to us one of the grandest expressions of self-dedication to great ends that we had ever witnessed, and our emotions were touched to the uttermost.

We believe that there is a striking tendency in the religion of our day toward an emphasis on manliness. There is a demand for the presentation of a virile Christ, who, while possessing the passive virtues of trust, patience, and resignation, shall also manifest what were evidently likewise in his nature, the heroic qualities which appeal particularly to men,

and which are needed to nerve strugglers in the midst of the world's terrific battle for every high endeavor and noble striving. We want not only the Christ of the Beatitudes—the Christ who blessed little children and conversed with Mary and Martha—but also the Christ who drove out the buyers and sellers from the temple courts, who scorched the hypocritical Pharisees with the lightning of his wrath, who “witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate,” and who died the Hero of the Ages upon his cross.

Standing prominently before the world to-day as exhibiting this Christian manliness in his own person is the Bishop of London. He is known to his most intimate friends as “Chuckles.” He likes a game of tennis, golf, or cricket. He is a busy little fellow, putting in every hour of the day in doing good. He composes his sermons, it is said, on the “tupenny” tube, and his lunch often consists of a ham sandwich eaten on the top of a London ’bus. He is a young man, yet he has been highly honored. He is at the head of one of the greatest metropolitan dioceses in the world. He is an enthusiast in settlement work in the East End. He is the friend of rich and poor alike. Always happy, always busy, always up to some good deed, too occupied in the affairs of others to pay much attention to himself, he seems, somehow, to appeal to us as an ideal churchman. He is of the type of man that we would like to have more of in the ministry. Nothing bores him, he is always interested. There is nothing sensational about him. It is merely his personality that draws. Not only is the bishop thoroughly manly, but his religion is of a definitely practical type, and his labors indicate

the kind of work which is cut out for Christians who would follow their Lord to-day. Speaking before Harvard, he said: "I have chosen to speak to you on some great problems that confront us in our cities—problems that I have to face every day of my life. The first deadful problem of our city life is that it keeps growing every year. London is increasing one hundred thousand in population every year and nothing can stop the growth. In London we are already packed in like sardines in a box. One of the most appalling problems I have to face is this yearly influx of one hundred thousand human beings. Our country villages are fast disappearing. Then there is the appalling overcrowding which we have in London already. Often I see five or six children and a father and mother all living in a single room. Another problem is the fearful mortality, especially among children, which is truly terrible. The death rate among children in the slum districts is often fifty-two in a thousand, and in healthy districts it averages only about eighteen in a thousand. At least half the children in London die needless deaths." To the solution of these problems this good bishop is giving himself, heart and soul. And this is the sort of religion which the world is more and more clamoring for in this hour.

We stood one day by the bier of a dear friend, once a parishioner, and attempted to conduct the funeral services. He had been a lifelong member of the Church. His attendance at public services was regular and constant, and he evidently enjoyed and profited by the worship and the sermon. He was a most intelligent discerner of the broader and deeper meanings of religion and of the spiritual significance

of the Scriptures. He had filled many functions—journalist, business promoter, financier. In his business life he had displayed a strict integrity; in his journalistic career he had stood for the higher ideals as against sensational methods; as a politician, strenuously contending for his party convictions, he had in mind the good of the common people, and the prosperity, along ideal lines, of the country; in municipal affairs he had striven for the better conditions of civic life; as a banker he had devoted himself to his calling, so as to insure for the institution intrusted to him no inconsiderable success. In his family life he carried a deep consecration to pure marital and fatherly love. When he died the press of the city spoke of him as a citizen who could be ill spared and whose presence would be greatly missed.

We have spoken of him as a Christian. And he was undoubtedly such. But he did not possess what is called "the devotional temperament." He was reserved in his expressions as to experience. If we are to cling to the mediæval and monastic idea of sainthood; if we are to think only of the fervid, pale, romantic, poetic, somewhat effeminate type as preeminently the "religious," then our friend could not be included among them. There was little of the rhapsodical or ecstatic in his make-up. His eyes were fixed on the level of the day's work instead of being rolled heavenward in seer-like adoration. He was not given to visions, but was a clear-sighted, level-headed man of firm convictions, who gave and took blows in the conflicts of life, but never hated his foeman. Shall we not have to revise our conceptions of the marks of the truly religious so as to include a multitude such as he—men immersed in the

currents of business life, where they are doing the God-appointed work on which they have been sent, and where they are displaying all fidelity, honorableness, conscientiousness? Although they may have almost nothing of the distinguishing characteristics of the rapt visionary, as the old masters depicted them, they, too, are entitled truly to be enrolled among those who are "called to be saints."

It is one of the good features of the altruism of our times, of all the philanthropic and missionary endeavor of our modern Church and Christianity, that it absorbs the thought so largely that good men and women have little time left to fuss and worry over themselves. They have little chance to grow morbidly introspective over the diagnosis of their own spiritual conditions. They do not doubtfully and interrogatively sing,

"'Tis a point I long to know—
Am I saved or am I no."

Even the question, as between Arminians and Calvinists, of "assurance of salvation" is heard debated comparatively little to-day. "It is not a good thing," said a physician to us recently, "for a man to be taking his own pulse and feeling about the region of his heart to note its beatings."

We once heard of a worker in a downtown mission who was completely wrapped up in seeking to save the lost. "But how about your own soul?" asked a zealous friend. "I had almost forgotten I had one!" was the rather remarkable response. But who can think that, in this entire self-forgetfulness for the sake of others, there was any danger of his soul being lost? He was pursuing the very best plan to

insure his own salvation—being oblivious of himself personally and giving himself unreservedly for the reclamation of others. The words of Jesus, it seems to us, will bear a broader application than a restricted reference to the physical life when he said, “For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s shall save it.” Such words as these rebuke all selfish solicitude and overanxious self-thought, whether concerning the body or the soul. Let a man do his duty as a man—practice self-denial and goodness and benevolence—and leave the rest to God.

Nearly fifty years ago this truth was well enunciated by Oliver Wendell Holmes in that weird and not over-pleasing tale, “Elsie Venner.” He wrote: “Can a man love his soul too well? Who, on the whole, constitute the nobler class of human beings—those who have lived mainly to make sure of their own personal welfare in another and future condition of existence, or they who have worked with all their might for their race, for their country, for the advancement of the kingdom of God, and left all personal arrangements concerning themselves to the sole charge of Him who made them and is responsible to himself for their safe keeping? Is an anchorite who has worn the stone floor of his cell into basins with his knees bent in prayer any more acceptable than the soldier who gives his life for the maintenance of any sacred right or truth, without thinking what will specially become of him in a world where there are two or three million colonists from this one planet to be cared for? These are grave questions, which must suggest themselves to those who know that there are many profoundly selfish

persons who are sincerely devout and perpetually occupied with their own future, while there are others who are perfectly ready to sacrifice themselves for any worthy object in this world, but are really too little occupied with their exclusive personality to think so much as many do about what is to become of them in another."

Is there not enough for us all to do—enough responsibility laid on Christians living in a world of sin—for us all to be earnestly and practically at work and wasting no time over undue apprehensiveness as to our salvation?

Salt is good, but if salt loses its saltness,
Wherewith will ye salt it?
Have salt in yourselves
And have peace with each other!

These were the words spoken by Jesus to his little band of disciples after he had discovered that his nation as a whole, refusing to be a Messianic people, had definitely repudiated him. The disciples are thought of now by Jesus as the sole remaining medium for the realization of the Messianic hope. If they do not retain their grace, then there is no further hope for the world. What a tremendous responsibility is cast upon them! What unimaginable destinies of humanity in all future ages hang trembling on their faithfulness or defection!

Christ's solemn words of warning have been paraphrased by a recent writer in these sentences: "You are the preserving salt in a corrupted, dying world. If you yourselves are no longer salt, how can anyone season you? You are worthless. God can do nothing but cast you out to be trodden under men's feet. You are the spiritual light of the world in dark-

ness. A history of past civic achievement cannot be hidden. God set a city on a hill (Jerusalem). He meant it to light the world. Men do not light a candle and put it under a shade, but on a stand. It is the duty of those with a divine revelation to let it shine, that men, seeing the revelation made manifest by your good words, may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Such a load of incomputable responsibility is laid upon Christians yet. If they fail, if they grow faithless and formal, if the light in them becomes darkness, what, then, will be the fate of the world depending on them for its salvation? The thought is solemn enough to arouse us all to redoubled consecration to the divine life.

CHAPTER VIII

SPIRITUALITY THE URGENT NEED

A RECENT writer in one of our religious papers says: "The average church member in these days feels very little responsibility resting upon him for personal work for individual souls. The most are satisfied simply with church attendance and contributions. This lack of individual effort is one of the weakest spots in our modern Christianity." An editor, speaking of the desired revival, asserts that he "shall consider the awakening genuine and notable if the inner life of many churches shall be deepened and vitalized. The best evangelism requires a certain atmosphere in the Church before it can accomplish much." He quotes the *Methodist Times*, of London, as saying that one chief reason of the failure of the simultaneous Free Church Mission in England some years ago was "that the churches themselves were not sufficiently saturated with religious feeling," and adds, "We cannot create in the community a spirit which is little in evidence in the Church itself; our efforts should be directed quite as much to arousing Christian zeal and purpose as to the winning of outsiders." What is this but to emphasize the explicit direction of Jesus to his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high? An unspiritualized Church can never, by any mechanical contrivances or inventions, bring about a spiritual revival. As another has said, "Any real revival cannot

simply be worked up; it must be prayed down from above."

It is well enough to debate about methods: whether each church in the town shall conduct its own special meeting, with the advantage which comes in pressing home individual responsibility upon members by the pastor; whether there shall be a concerted effort of the several churches in union meetings, thus displaying Christian fraternity to the world, appealing to a wider constituency, and reducing the labor and cost of the spiritual campaign; whether the pastor in his own church, or the several pastors in turn, shall take charge of the services, or whether some specialist—an evangelist of character and of good record for successful pleading with men—shall be employed, releasing the pastors for evangelistic work in pastoral service. It is well to discuss all of these things freely and fully; but both pastors and evangelists, individual meetings and union efforts will fail unless the Church people have an abundant spirituality which is manifest to the world. No organizing of committees, no advertising, no array of big choirs, no hiring of great halls, no "drawing power" of a celebrated name can take the place of the fundamental thing—a spiritualized Church.

We hear much about the new evangelism and how it must steer clear of fanaticism, keep in touch with the intelligence and culture of our time, remember that conversion is a broad thing, taking in the whole man—physically, socially, intellectually, morally, spiritually—that religion also means philanthropy and social redemption and corporate salvation. We are in no danger of forgetting all this, but, nevertheless, when it comes to winning the individual soul

there must be, as of old, the direct appeal to the emotions. No revival was ever yet ushered in by propositions as passionless as the theorems of geometry. And this appeal to the emotions must be made by pastors, evangelists, and people who have real emotion themselves. If the feeling be a fictitious one, a mood induced by mere mechanical excitement, the semblance of concern for others, but not a genuine expression of an abiding passion of the soul, it will be quickly enough discovered and will be utterly impotent. It will be repudiated, if not formally, yet silently and actually. There must be absolutely nothing artificial, nothing either consciously or unconsciously simulated.

The appeal must be made, as of old, to the wills of men, to break off their sins in righteousness, to repent of evil—to decide for God and right—for Christ and his truth and ideals of life. But if such an appeal is to be effective in any community, it must come out of a church membership itself visibly zealous for righteousness; it must be backed up by the unconscious influence of men and women who, as the unconverted are really convinced and satisfied, have indeed renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, and are living pure, conscientious, high-pitched lives, following, in business and society, all goodness in simplicity of consecration.

The appeal must be made, as of old, to accept Christ—to take him as a Saviour and Master—to bring all living and doing under his spirit and to his standards. But if it is to be efficient, it must have behind it the actual indorsement and exemplification of a body of Christians whose love for Christ is patent and discernible; who are evidently actuated

by the Christ-life within; who themselves are, without any question, subjecting themselves to his rule as the Gospels make it known; to whom he, as others may see without difficulty, is most certainly precious, his atonement touching the deepest chords of gratitude and affection, his law of love and his whole teaching accepted unhesitatingly as authoritative and obeyed. Where the unconverted find those to whom Christianity is thus a reality, an actual fact and force, an experience, something lived by and lived out, the exhortation to them to turn and embrace Christ will come with tremendous meaning and cogency. Its influence will be well-nigh irresistible. Must there not be, therefore, first, the spiritualized Church before there can be expected any spiritual victories, any conquests from the world to Christ? And shall we not have it?

We have been much impressed in looking through a late volume by Dr. David Gregg on individual prayer as a working force in the lives of Abraham, Jesus, Paul, and in the Church and Christian experience. We would that many pastors and Church members would read this book. We are profoundly convinced of the need of the truth it emphasizes. It convicts us all of too little and too unbelieving prayer. The Church will not go forward and its revival fires will not be rekindled until there is more real praying done, not only in public, but particularly in private.

Let us state, without quotation marks, some of Dr. Gregg's pointed and heart-revealing sayings: A grand, bold life will produce grand, bold prayers; a limited life will produce limited prayers. As a rule, religious life registers itself in prayer. Be-

tween a man's life and his praying there is a constant action and reaction. Our prayers broaden and contract our lives, and our lives broaden and contract our prayers. God is always in advance of the largest prayers of his people. Hence our largest encouragement in prayer, and in redemptive work, is in God. Workers in the gospel field, carrying on their hearts the burden of souls; parents praying for their children, wives praying for the salvation of their husbands, friends praying for friends, saints longing for the redemption of sinners, revivalists dreaming of the repetition of Pentecost—let all know that God is in advance of them, has a deeper yearning for immortal souls, a more intense desire for a revival of religion, a larger mercy, and a larger pity for sinners than they have.

The great men of God—Baxter, Luther, Knox, Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Finney, Payson, Muller, Moody—were all men who devoted themselves to much and fervent prayer. The secret of the life of Jesus lay in his prayers. Prayer brought him the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost made him the man he was. The most real things in his career were his prayers. His whole life centered in them. Prayer made him. Take it out of his life and you unmake him. He was sometimes too busy to eat, but never too busy to pray. "Too busy to pray!" One might as well say "Too busy to live." Prayer is not lost time. It is living itself. It is that without which no time is saved, but all time is lost. To pray is to live; not to pray is not to live, it is simply to exist. If we are to live well and effectively, heroically and victoriously, we must live our life first in prayer before we attempt to live it in word and deed.

The most of us are too weak and inefficient because we are wrong in the item of our prayers; they are infrequent, narrow, carnal, cold, and unmeaning. Paul put his best efforts into prayer and so should we. Our prayers, as a rule, cost us little. This is the reason we are so feeble in prayer and why prayer is such a small power in our lives.

In the activities of the Church, and in all its efforts to evangelize the world, the prayer-power is neglected because it is not sufficiently magnified and set into its deserved prominence. It is neglected even by those ordained to the ministry of the gospel. Mr. Moody used to say that if he were choosing ten men to work with him for the redemption of a city, he would choose ten men who could pray well in preference to any ten men who could preach well. It was prayer that was the power in the apostolic days. It was a praying audience of disciples that made a fisherman's sermon instrumental in the conversion of three thousand souls. In the era recorded in the book of Acts there was a perfect passion for prayer. Men laid hold of God, using God, being girded by God, and, being girded by God, being God-filled and God-strong. We want back again in the Christian Church the passion of prayer which in the first days established that Church and made it the power it was when it had such men as Peter and John and Paul—all of them giants at the throne of grace. Prayer brings God into communication with us and makes him and us coworkers. It is the standing miracle of the ages. We may not understand its philosophy, but we must accept the fact. God has so ordained it and we see it is so. Nothing so marks the decline or the apostasy of a

decaying church as assigning to prayer a secondary place.

In the days of the apostles there were no less than four Pentecosts and they were all results of prayer. God will always see to it that there shall be a succession of Pentecosts if the Church will only do its work in his way. Church history abounds in examples which prove this statement—examples taken from the ministry of Edwards, Wesley, Moody, Hudson Taylor, and many more.

Such is Dr. Gregg's message to Christianity and the churches of our day. As we have read and culled from his book, we have felt ourselves searched, rebuked, and brought to judgment. We believe a very large part of the difficulty with our present form of religion is just where he indicates it to be—in the individual neglect of passionate concern and earnest prayer for the conversion of others. May his appeal not sound on deaf ears!

We are not among those who, like Dr. Newman Smythe (who has recently written a book to prove his proposition), believe that Protestantism has spent its force and is no longer vital and progressive. We have little sympathy with those preachers who, in the pulpit, take up the same lamentation and apply it to religion generally. Certainly, in many respects, the Church was never more vigorous and active than to-day. It was never so thoroughly organized for work and for publishing its message to the world. Preaching was never more practical. Preachers were never better equipped intellectually. Innumerable philanthropies are sustained in the name of Christ. Missionary efforts multiply and broaden magnificently, and fill us with wonder over

their success and their prospects. Money is poured out lavishly for the sake of the kingdom. Education, collegiate and for the masses, having its incentive in Christian motive, flourishes beyond precedent. Churches, both of the moderate and the costly type, rise everywhere. Bibles are printed and scattered by the million and religious literature abounds. This is an age of social and political reform, and great movements like those for civic righteousness, industrial betterment, and temperance rely definitely upon religious sentiment and enthusiasm for their momentum. Those who compose their recruits are mostly Christians. The great world of business feels the impulse. There is a marvelous awakening of interest in the program of the Church on the part of the laity, both men and women, everywhere. The young people are banded together. The Sunday schools have grown to a vast army and were never as efficient. The Scriptures never before received such intelligent exposition. Great problems, like the elevation of an entire black race, the evangelization of millions of immigrants, the salvation of our great cities, the conversion of the world, are undertaken hopefully, grandly, and hero leaders are forthcoming. Huge conventions meet to plan for yet larger crusades. Certainly optimism is justifiable. What is there to complain about?

And yet, amid all this glorious activity, is there not something lacking of which we are all aware—something the need of which each of us feels in himself, and is forced to recognize as a deficient quantity in the age wherein we live and in the Church of to-day? It is the thing broadly called “spirituality.” We do not mean sanctimoniousness, nor any arti-

ficial unctuousness or mannerisms, but the real mood and attitude of the soul. It was present among the early Christians. Saint Paul and Saint John abound in it and yet, withal, were not of the ascetic type—"other-worldly" recluses—but of contact with real life, thoroughly alive and in touch with humanity. We feel it as we sing the hymns of Watts or Wesley, or when we read the psalms of the Old Testament. But neither psalm nor hymn, we fear, expresses the dominant religious temper of to-day. They speak in a tongue foreign for us. We repeat the syllables, but do not get the meaning.

We are intensely practical. We have moved far away from anything that may be called mysticism. In fact, we rather smile at exhibitions of old-fashioned "saintliness," surviving in certain very aged people. In our religion, as in our bread-winning, we are "business" through and through. Our ministers must be "hustlers." Our church services are worked like a railroad schedule and are often nervous rather than restful and devotional. There must be "something doing" all the time and the announcements of the week's program burden us. Our church work is nothing unless "organized" according to the latest inventions and with offices and a full corps of secretaries. Indeed, we admit that it must be so. The Committee on Ways and Means is an exceedingly important one. System is indispensable. But O for the breath of the Spirit to animate the whole!

We have thousands of devoted and efficient preachers, but is there not a certain tendency to make preaching a mere profession, with the literary note prevailing? Too often, we fear, it is the ques-

tion of eminent position, the size and influence of the parish, and the proportions of the salary which outweigh other considerations with us. Who will deny that, among ministers, these things are talked about, and evidently thought about, disproportionately to the concern shown as to the spiritual condition of the Church and the world? How seldom do two Christians, or even two ministers, sit down to an exchange of confidences on innermost experiences of Christ's truths. The subject seems to be taboo—not good form—and therefore avoided; or else there is a real lack of the experience and of interest in it. Even evangelism runs the danger of becoming professional and mechanical, and we hear more about "methods" than we do about motive and spirit. We are not writing in any mood of depression and we hope we have not unintentionally overdrawn the picture.

A writer in the Methodist Recorder of London has given us some suggestive reflections on this all-important theme. He thinks that the words "spirituality" and "to be spiritually minded" have "fallen on evil times and evil tongues," and are only an echo, a reminiscence of things once felt or seen. He defines "spirituality" as the "general bent of the thought and motive directed to divine things. Just as to be carnally minded is to have the general bent of the thought and motive directed to things that are of the earth, earthy, so, to have the dominant currents of mind, and heart, and will all flow out to the Invisible and Eternal is to be spiritually minded!" And he truthfully says: "Nobody will contend that this attitude of mind is as common as it once was; indeed, we shrink from its sterner expressions with a

peculiar shame and fear. The tone of our modern life lacks this particular emphasis, and the general trend and current of it is not to things behind the veil, is not remote and lifted out of time. Though it must be a joy to the Redeemer to see the gentle, persuasive, and unwearied efforts of much modern church philanthropy, yet the loss of spirituality is a grave thing—the decay of it a very grave thing. Spirituality is not a luxury, not an enervation, not a shrinking from one's fellows, or from service—it is a passion for the facts of things.” And he concludes his searching study in these words: “This is a matter of life, not of policy. Our policies, our schemes, whether for the Church or the community, will have no chance of solving the problems unless they are informed and inspired by the guiding of this quality of the sons of God.”

Lowell somewhere says: “I have observed that many who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures hasten to redress the balance by giving a reverent credit to the revelations of inspired tables and camp stools. Our nature resents the closing up of its windows on the emotional and imaginative side, and revenges itself as it can.” And again he says, “I have an old opinion, strengthening with the years, that it is as important to keep the soul alive as the body; nay, that it is the life of the soul which gives its value to that of the body.”

We believe there are few reflecting persons upon whose minds these truths have not been pressed by the development of many such movements in our present day, such as Christian Science, Theosophy, New Thought, etc. Whenever Christianity itself neglects the proper attention due its own

spiritual and mystical truths, and runs off into purely mechanical methods of activity, then all sorts of spurious mysticisms, appealing to the transcendental elements in our natures, make their appearance. We believe thoroughly in benevolent work, in institutional programs, and the organization of all kinds of societies, but the mechanism of the Church on these lines must not supersede the vital element of deep piety and soul-longing so prominent in the Scriptures and so conspicuous in the lives of the great Christian saints. If Christians are to become simply men of affairs, conducting eleemosynary institutions as they would corporations, then they miss the very inner spirit of Christ as it is so eminently brought out to us in Saint John's Gospel. And the hearts of men, hungering for some inspiration from above, will feel themselves denied and deprived, and be easy victims for any fanatical and superstitious scheme of fallacious mysticism, which simply substitutes for real spiritual utterance ponderous words, vague and foggy sentences, and a phraseology that is as unintelligible and meaningless as it is pretentious and pompous.

There is a distinct need of a divine and supernatural power in the life of each individual who would realize his ideals in righteousness. Christianity promises and furnishes this power, this moral efficiency. This supernatural energy is also for the Church. Its gospel is, as we have insisted, no proclamation of an ethical system simply. It is the revelation of the dynamic Christ, whose encouraging words to his disciples, as he sent them out on their mission of world-conquest, were: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth."

He wields the power of an infinite love and of an almighty, quickening Spirit.

His definite promise to his followers was that he would send forth the promise of his Father upon them after his ascension. They should receive power when the Holy Spirit should come upon them. They were to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be clothed with power from on high. They might naturally think that, having been witnesses of the marvelous life, the miracles, the resurrection, they were abundantly equipped to go out and proclaim the wonderful gospel of Jesus without waiting a single hour. But they were strictly forbidden to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the fulfillment of the promise. They should be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Then came Pentecost, with its mysterious rushing of a mighty wind, symbol of the Spirit, which, though viewless like the air, could manifest its presence and work by its visible effects; with the tongues, parting asunder, like as of fire—the token of the divine faculty of speech infused with a new and high consecration from heaven—of the persuasive pleading and eloquence, addressed to men's minds, hearts, and consciences, which should turn thousands to the Saviour of the world; with the gift of other tongues by which the Spirit gave them utterance for the sake of strange peoples. Pentecost can never be explained on any naturalistic principles. Its mystery can never be rationalized away. The attempt made by mockers when the effect of the miracle was first showing itself ("They are filled with new wine") was as inadequate as any subsequent attempt. No one can read the Acts of the Apostles,

with the several references to the disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit, without feeling that here is a record of something neither earthly, natural, ordinary, nor human, but mysterious, inexplicable, divine, supernatural, miraculous, Godlike. Manifestly it was something coming "from above."

This power has in all ages been the secret of the success of the Church. It can never be dispensed with. It must energize her in the twentieth century as in the first, if she would accomplish her mission. The Church can never become a mere human organization—a social club meeting under some general moral and religious auspices. It cannot be an ethical culture society and nothing more. If it is to transform human lives, it must be something better than Sunday lectures from the pulpit. They who conduct the affairs of the Church—its trustees, stewards, superintendents, society presidents—must never lose sight of this absolutely essential supernatural element in the life of the Christian organism. Organization, finances, planning are humanly important, but the Spirit is the thing all-important and altogether indispensable. Without it the Church is a body without a soul. No artificial zeal can make up for the divine, supernatural energy. Galvanic twitchings of inanimate bodies only ghastlily simulate real life. There must be the realization of the true Christian mysticism—"Abide in me and I in you." These words surpass our understanding, but suggest vast possibilities to our faith. Whenever, as at present, this mystical element of Christianity is partially supplanted by human machinery in the Church, then pseudo-systems of mysticism—systems which mock and caricature the reality—arise, whose

only claim is their own unintelligibility and irrationality.

Pentecost was no isolated event, standing separately by itself in the ages. In its essence it must be perennial. Wind and flame and tongues depart.

The Spirit overbrooding all—
Eternal love remains.

The Pentecostal gift is no fanaticism like the induced catalepsy of Indian fakirs, or "getting the power" by the over-emotional and hysterical. Let the churches realize that their organization cannot be an end in itself; that no new edifice, new organ, new choir, new and popular pastor speaking however fluently and magnetically; no crowd, no "big collections," no fashionable set of worshipers will avail anything for the conversion of men without this miraculous, God-given power.

How shall local churches be made efficient, benevolent and missionary work be prosecuted energetically, labor for the masses be effectual, resistance to organized evils be successful, unless, filled with the Holy Spirit, the Church has power with God and so can prevail? Ecclesiasticism is a miserable substitute. As the whole atmosphere is surcharged with electricity and simply waits to be drawn off to move the ponderous wheels of commerce, so above us and around us is the reservoir of divine, supernatural power, ready for utilization by the Church of Christ!

On the Church, O Power Divine,
Cause thy glorious face to shine;
Till the nations, from afar,
Hail her as their guiding star;
Till her sons, from zone to zone,
Make thy great salvation known.

There is no greater want that our generation manifestly confesses than that of a new Pentecost. What this present era requires more than anything else is the baptism of the Spirit. There must come into the manifold processes of our modern life an influx of spirituality from above that will fill them with higher purposes and significances. Life, as led at present, is altogether too sordid and material, and confined to the earthly plane and horizon. The dollar mark is stamped upon most of our ambitions and undertakings. Some present-day Jeremiah might well raise his lamentation that the "prophets find no vision from the Lord." Far more than in the days of Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

There is a strange lack of idealism. Reluctantly we have been forced to accept in large measure the statement that it is increasingly the case that the monetary standard and gauge is the measurement applied by our modern society to men. The successful man, the man to be respected, is he who has a good bank account. The unsuccessful man, the man to be pitied and passed by, is he who is not rated in Bradstreet's and rents no big-sized safe-deposit drawer for his bonds and securities. The print of the cloven-hoof mammon deity is everywhere discernible. Unless life can be lifted up to some higher level by the arm of God; unless some "rushing of a mighty wind" of inspiration can sweep over it; unless "tongues, parting asunder, like as of fire," can inflame the heavy utterances of the market place; unless the message of the men of the Book

can be listened to and heeded in the streets and on 'change; unless our young men can see visions of something nobler and better than we have just now; unless our old men can dream dreams of a new order, imbued with loftier aims and enthusiasms; unless this age can, somehow, be born anew or from above, then it is hopelessly vulgarized—it cannot see the kingdom of God.

Society must be penetrated by diviner motives. The ostentatious show, the rivalries and jealousies, the round of vanities, the hollowness and shallowness of this "House of Mirth" must be supplanted by something more sensible, serious, and profitable. Marriage must mean something deeper and more sanctified than the frivolous relationship that Ibsen has so unsparingly laid bare in "A Doll's House." Our literature and art must strike into themes more thoughtful and worth while. Our political life must be lifted out of the low region of the factional squabbles of rival leaders. There must be everywhere the uprising of a mighty passion for the things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. When such a generous temper shall again possess us, and revive us, the base appraisals that the curbstone broker and the "new rich" put upon life will be swept aside and the true standards of right and pure living will appear. But it will take a Pentecost to do it. The greatest necessity of our times is God. It is perilous work trying to get on without some religion which is vital, effective, controlling.

Pentecost is a perennial need, but particularly so when the forces of worldliness seem to be successfully resisting the forces of spirituality, and per-

sistently encroaching upon the soul's domains. On one occasion the officers of the Federation of Churches of New York City visited President Roosevelt to ask his aid in arousing a greater interest in religion. Commenting on this, a secular paper, *Leslie's Weekly*, says, "The great need of the churches of New York, and of every other city, is more spiritual life, enthusiasm, power," but it adds: "They can obtain spiritual power without going to Washington, if they want it. Their greatest need is an old-fashioned revival of religion. The way to obtain that is by direct appeal to God, accompanied with confession of their sins and humiliating spiritual weakness. The churches are not really in earnest. Many individuals are. More than a few of the preachers seem to be. Some church organizations are. But the churches of our great cities as a class are not consecrated, spiritual, militant. If they were, they would stop the desecration of the Sabbath, close the Sunday theaters, and shut up most of the saloons. All that is needful is that they should mass their forces and vote and work together on moral issues. If church members were as enthusiastic for righteousness as they are for partisan politics, they could carry every moral issue to triumphant success."

At our first reading of this we thought we would take issue with it and say that we considered the charge that "the churches are not really in earnest" was too sweeping and too severe. But it will do us good to ponder it for a while. There may be more truth in it than we think. And if formalism, worldly conformity, listlessness, and spiritual indifference have to any degree affected the Church's power and

efficiency, so that it is failing, as indicated, in carrying out the reforms it might in suppressing crying evils, it is time that we should begin to look most earnestly for "that which was spoken by the prophet Joel":

And it shall be in the last days, saith God,
I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh.

Bishop Arthur Cleveland Coxe has written a "Hymn for Whitsunday" which might well be made the prayer of all Christians and of all churches:

Breath of the Lord, O Spirit blest,
Inspiring Guide, consoling Guest,
Thy perfect gifts and lights to lend,
On mortal heads and hearts descend;
Come to the sluggish sense and mind
As comes the rushing mighty wind.

Spirit of power, come down: draw near,
Spirit of truth and holy fear;
Succor poor souls that strive with sin,
The foes without, the foes within;
And, like the morning's sun, dispel
The shades of death, the powers of hell.

Fire of the Lord, and Light divine,
Thou glory of the eternal Trine,
Come, and this gloomy world inflame
With Jesus' love, Jehovah's name;
And from those lamps before the throne
Send seven-fold radiance all thine own.

But we must not be discouraged and look only on the dark side. There are those who are constantly confusing religion with the forms of religion. But a manifestation of change here or there must not be misinterpreted. The broad view must be taken. We may easily make too much of the altered conditions of revivals, the slimly attended evening service, the question of the comparative non-attendance of

men at public worship, the break of the industrial classes with the Church, and the so-called "indifference of the masses."

We may confidently affirm that there was never a greater or more general interest in Jesus Christ among all ranks of people. All literature is full of him. Even those who neglect the Church reverence him. Bibles, tracts, and religious literature were never more generally distributed and read. Christian education is more widely diffused than ever. Preaching more practical and earnest, both ethical and spiritual, it would be hard to find in previous centuries. Piety is freer than formerly from cant, sanctimoniousness, and hypocrisy. And what shall we say of the zeal for missions and the self-sacrifice of missionaries and deaconesses? of the Volunteer Movement, the Layman's Missionary Movement, the young people's societies, the enthusiasm for Sunday schools, church erection, city evangelization, hospitals, homes for the aged and children, colleges, the uplifting of the colored race? What shall we say of the broader humanitarianism—a philanthropy inspired directly by Christ himself—the general improvement in ethical standards in social and business life, the determination to find a just settlement of the industrial situation, the amazing spread of the temperance reform and of prohibition legislation, the growing conscientiousness in the use of wealth, the larger and truer conceptions of God, the clearer understanding of the real character of Jesus, the saner and gladder worship, the prominence of the loving deed in religion above the formal creed? There is danger in laying a "flattering unction" to the soul and in crying, "Peace, peace

when there is no peace." But there is equal danger in depression to the vital forces of the Church by an untrue exaggeration of her disabilities and depreciation of all her present work and worthiness.

In the present awakening of the American people to the iniquities that have been rampant in business, social, and civic life, Washington Gladden sees the evidences of a true religious revival which is real and essential, though not appearing in the traditional form. Men, he thinks, are turning away somewhat from the excessive idolization of money, and material things and "creature comforts." Not all men are doing so. It may be that the great mass are still in mad pursuit of the dollar, but there is considerable evidence that no small part of the community is seeing that there are higher things to strive for and is looking inward on the things of the soul. Many men are confessing that the things they once cared for supremely they now hold in subordination. They have experienced a real "change of heart" in their valuation of the ends which are worth while and that count in life. As the old-time Methodists used to say, the things which they once loved they now hate, and the things they once hated they now love.

This may be putting the case a little strong, but that there is a moral revolution taking place in the ideals of our people no one can doubt. If it is styled a general revival few will object. It is something to be devoutly thankful for and to be encouraged in larger and larger development. The ways of the Spirit are not always the same from age to age, and if the revival for which we are all hoping and praying shall be accompanied by a predominance of the

moral element rather than the emotional, as in times past, we do well to recognize gratefully the true religiousness of the movement, and to thank Almighty God for it. Religion may not be as dead as some of us have been thinking. The difficulty may be with our non-recognition of it in a new and unfamiliar aspect. But God fulfills himself in many ways.

There may be much in the religious situation which provokes serious concern. But other aspects inspire confidence and hope. One of these is the evidence that the great general public still manifests an absorbing interest in religious matters. With so many and vast questions of national and international importance to claim attention; with wonderful changes and agitations throughout the world in the breaking up and transformation of old nations and systems, and the establishment of the new; with the press presenting every day multitudinous discussions, of amazing variety and attraction, in politics, commerce, finance, education, science, art, and amusement, religion still maintains its hold on the minds of the people. Like the Ancient Mariner's tale, the problems of the soul have a fascination from which men cannot tear themselves away. They "cannot choose but hear."

There are frequent comments upon the number of people who do not go to church. But there is a great multitude who do go. While some churches may be sparsely attended, others have "standing room only." Tens of thousands of sermons are preached. What other theme than religion could bring the people together, in hundreds of meetings, twice or thrice a week, year in and year out? "Age cannot

with nor custom stale its infinite variety." No disputations in politics or science could, for such a period, so attract and hold the public. In "drawing power" religion still maintains its preëminence. The people make enormous sacrifices in order to build churches, maintain worship, and support missions. With all the competition of a rich and various literature, the Bible's popularity is still undiminished. When Phillips Brooks and Dwight L. Moody were alive large audiences of men would fill the great auditoriums of Trinity Church and Madison Square Garden to hear them. They came in business hours, and they were business men, practical and hard-headed. They listened to the most serious presentation of profoundest theological themes. It made little difference that one preacher was "broad" and the other "orthodox." It was shown that religion under either guise stirred their hearts to the depths. Theology for them was not a defunct thing. Whether in stately periods or homely, direct talk, it found in them its mark. Men as well as women evidenced their need of religion. And the same phenomena are now displayed under the evangelistic preaching of a "Billy" Sunday.

It is said that the people are exhibiting a declining interest in the religious press and that the theological reviews and denominational papers are in straits for lack of support. It is true that several theological reviews have had to suspend. For technical and abstruse theological discussion the public may have little taste, but for theology popularly presented, level to the average understanding, there is a great demand. The monthly magazines of widest circulation return again and again to the religious

article. One most extensively distributed ran Canon Farrar's "Life of Lives," a biography of Jesus, as a serial, and another the life of Luther. A prominent metropolitan journal continued for many weeks a discussion on immortality. The tiny books of devotion have a very large sale. There are some who would have us believe that biblical criticism has destroyed the faith of the people in things religious. But the evidence does not point that way. The New York Sun once said: "Interest and inquiry concerning questions of religion were never more active than they are now. Of the voluminous correspondence coming to us, the subject which engages the greatest part devoted to any single theme is religion. Last year we printed for many weeks these voluntary discussions, and they constituted the most remarkable, and in some respects the ablest, debate on the questions treated which has appeared anywhere of recent years; yet so vast was the volume of this correspondence that we could not publish more than a comparatively few of the letters received, else we should have had room for little besides. Nor did this flood of correspondence on specific and general religious questions cease when we brought the debate to an end; it still continues to make up a larger body of our correspondence than concerns itself with any other subject. If a thoughtful suggestion concerning religion is made in this paper, it always bears fruit in many letters to us from every part of the Union, and the vast majority of them are from laymen and from religious believers, rather than infidels."

It seems to us that these facts make a basis for a reasonable hope of a general religious revival and

of the permanent advancement and strengthening of all religious concerns. It behooves the Church and clergy to study seriously how to make appeal to this fundamental, underlying trait of the human soul, and press for the definite acceptance of Christ and his way. It is indeed the one most significant and encouraging sign in the spiritual heavens—the burden for a great and general revival of religion which has seemingly been rolled onto all pastors and churches alike. We do not remember anything quite so universal, persistent, and solemnly pressing in recent years. There is a widespread conviction, which has taken firm hold upon the churches, that the times are urgent, that man's need of a great spiritual quickening and empowering is supreme, that we have come to a climax-hour in our history when God must manifest himself mightily in the salvation of men. This profound feeling is displayed in the sermons of all of our evangelical pulpits. All of our religious papers are discussing the question in every issue. Even the radicals among religious bodies have taken up the tremendous theme from their own point of view.

And this gathering conviction is not simply the expression of man's desire. It is God's Spirit making itself felt through the human soul with which he is in touch. Does it sometimes seem as though men were very earnest for the salvation of sinners, and as if they prayed and entreated the Almighty in vain for a demonstration of converting power? Does there sometimes seem to be what a recent writer has styled "the divine indifference"? when "earnest men watch with dismay the immoralities around them, the orgies of lust and crime, the prosperity of

villains, the grinding of the poor, and in their struggle against it they get no help"; when, as Carlyle said in his spleen, "God sits in heaven and does nothing!" Or, when, as Faber describes not how it really is but how "it looks":

He hides himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God;
He is least seen when all the powers
Of ill are most abroad.

This is the natural feeling which often oppresses us in laboring for the higher morality and civic life against the activities of the devil and devilish men. We almost react, sometimes, too, in our evangelistic ardor, when our prayers seem to bring no answer whatever, into a pessimistic mood which imagines the universe is deaf, and that nobody even in heaven cares whether men are saved or not. But, as the author we just quoted says, this would be the most egregious of mistakes. It is only the personal that can help the personal. God's approach to us is by the indwelling of his Spirit within us and the expression of that Spirit through us. He incarnates his very soul and passion in us. "The developing sentiment of the moral community, the sentiment which protests against injustice and works for a better order, is simply his voice in the world. He speaks to man *through* man, and no other way. Our very impatience with the oppositions and the slow progress is but the rush of the stream of his life in the too-narrow channels of our limited nature. The revolt of our conscience against the low moral order is his battle cry for a better one."

This, it seems to us, is admirably stated, and it applies to our zeal and frequent impatience in spirit-

ual movements as well as in moral crusades. Our prayers are not returning to us fruitless. God is already manifesting himself in the growing intensity of his people. There is a conviction, becoming constantly weightier, that men have really gone on quite far enough in paying such exclusive attention to material things—in frenzied rush after pelf, place, and power, in “the mad race after the dollar”—and that it is quite high time that the concerns of the immortal soul had some little attention paid them. There is distinct reaction in that direction.

Again, there is the outcry of a public aghast at a seeming “tidal wave of immorality” breaking over the land. There is still altogether too much political corruption. Divorce and lax marriage relations, fornication and adultery scandalize us. In great cities, like New York and Chicago, murders, suicides, and “hold-ups” crowd upon each other’s heels. The newspapers every morning are records of a carnival of crime. Is it any wonder that people everywhere are crying out: “O Lord, how long? Shall there be no end to this? Is there no help? If a revival of religion will make things safer, more decent, more protective of property, of chastity, civic purity, honor, and human life, let us all join in praying for it and working for it tremendously, for it is frightfully needed.” But our souls must be thoroughly cleansed before God can bring his best answer. Why do we want men converted? To swell the church record? To help on with the finances? That we may make a vainglorious report at Synod, Convention, or Conference? That the evangelist may advertise his “thousand souls saved” through his instrumentality?

It will be only as we have an unaffected passion for men themselves and for their own good and for bringing them to their Saviour, which is free from all ulterior motives, free from corrupting, worldly dross—that God can use us as his instruments in conversion and revival. May this simple and sincere sympathy, this highest form of humanitarianism and philanthropy fill the heart of the entire Church of Christ!

In many instances, doubtless, the chief obstacle to evangelistic success is the dead-and-alive condition of the Church. But, in many other cases, this cannot be truthfully alleged. There is a healthy, fervent spirit of piety in the Church, but many other practical considerations put a check upon the Church's converting power.

It is not easy to give a correct diagnosis of our present religious condition. No one specific thing can be singled out as preventing growth and progress. We are hedged about by a variety of considerations. The main thing we would instance is the growing complexity of our present-day life. The thought of the people is absorbed in a thousand events and projects, and it is correspondingly more difficult to gain their attention for spiritual affairs. The multitudinous happenings and plannings of a bustling, driving world, in a high-tension age, divide and distract the minds of men, and withdraw from the possible contemplation of religion and duty. Another condition is created than existed in simpler times. Men are not absolutely indifferent to religion, the gospel has not lost its power, the Church is not moribund, the ministry is not faithless. But how to catch the ear of the hurrying throng—how

to get them to pause, reflect, and pray—is the hard question to be answered. In rural life this is not so difficult. The “special services” at the church are the one attraction as well as the privilege of the village. Conversions are consequently more numerous in the country. But the cities demand the closest, the most prayerful consideration of ways and means. Not only does the intensity of the time affect the “outsiders” who ought to be reached by religion, but it affects Church people themselves. Every city pastor knows the difficulties. Early in the summer a large proportion of his most influential members leave for seashore or mountain resort, and do not return until the fall has well begun. Scarcely have the Church and Sunday school “Rally days” been observed before the preparations for the holidays begin. In the home there is extraordinary occupation. There is likely to be much energy of a certain kind in the church circles, for this is the season for festivals, fairs, sales, bazaars. Little or nothing distinctly religious can be done until these are over. Sometimes these seem necessary and justifiable, but there is an increasing conviction that such matters have been overworked, and the demand is growing for a simpler method of collecting funds. The months of October and November, if left free for definite evangelizing, might bring glorious profit. This season is unpreempted by special claimants.

It is our habit to hold evangelistic meetings during January. Something may be said for the opportuneness of the date. Reflection is awakened with the birth of a new year. The time is sanctioned by custom. It meets the expectation of the people. But in many places in our northern latitudes this is the

most unfortunate month of the whole calendar to set apart for such services. In Minnesota we have tried to conduct revivals when the thermometer was down to twenty or thirty below, and, ordinarily, this is the period of cold, fog, storms, slush, grip, and general physical misery. It seems like flying in the face of Providence and common sense to select this month out of the whole year, when the spring time is so much more agreeable. Then, for many, there would be no such menace to health in venturing out at night, and large audiences could be reasonably expected.

Other circumstances also stand in the way in the city, if not in the country. Merchants are engaged, in the first of the year, taking their inventories, and are tied down to their business more closely than at any other season. The social season is at its height and many are drawn into its attractions. There is particular reason why the Lenten weeks should be selected for special religious services. It is getting to be more and more the custom in many churches to observe the week before Easter Sunday by special services on each night. The custom is one that has such manifest propriety in it, and such possibilities of spiritual profit, that we wish to do all we can, by way of recommendation and exhortation, to persuade all pastors to prepare for such meetings and announce them well in advance. The weather is more propitious and society rests.

If no evangelistic services have been previously held during the year, the advisability of such a course is apparent, and the time might well be extended to two or three weeks. If there have been revival services, there is no reason why these addi-

tional meetings should not also be held, but every reason for them.

The events in the closing period of Jesus's earthly life are so naturally affecting that the deepest emotions of our souls are easily wrought upon by the simplest comment upon them. The subjects that obviously present themselves to the preacher are so suggestive and searching, so touching and penetrating, that they will almost preach themselves if the heart has been brought, by prayer and meditation, into solemn communion with them. There are no themes that will fill the heart of the Christian with more holy thoughts and grateful reflections as he thinks of the One who died for his sins, or that will move him in thankfulness to more sincere consecration. And, likewise, there are no themes better calculated to touch the conscience of the sinner and lead to repentance.

The revival is blocked in other ways. First, the particular church people who really ought to be in the service are conspicuous by their absence. The good folk who go regularly to prayer meeting and class meeting are always on hand. They compose most of the audience. They need the help which comes to them, but not as much as do others. The business men—frequently those of the official board—will tell the pastor emphatically, "Can't come; would be glad to, but—too many engagements." In many cases this may be true. But we are certain that frequently they could find a way or make it. Sometimes, when the services have gathered momentum and interest, we have seen them drawn in, and there seemed to be little difficulty in their attendance. Likewise, ladies and young people who were so full

of social engagements that they could not come, and prayed to be excused, were attracted. If a revival does no more good in a church than to get its hold upon this large class of Christians, it certainly has been worth while. But these church members ought to consider seriously whether they could not, by some self-sacrifice, put themselves into the current at the start, and, with the whole body of the Church, seek to win the unconverted. They need not load up with so many "events," socially. Let lodges, clubs, teas, dinners, receptions—everything but the absolutely necessary—be side-tracked, and give the main line rails to Christ.

One of the great illustrated weeklies once printed a statement in which truth and error seemed to be mixed in about equal proportions: "It is true that the churches, on the whole, are out of touch with the times, behind the age, and not in advance, as they should be—their teachings and their methods not in adjustment with the needs and demands of the everyday life of everyday men. If the churches confessedly fail, as they do, to reach the masses; if attendance is falling off and interest in religion declining, it is not that men and women are growing harder, more unbelieving and materialistic; not that they feel less the need of spiritual guidance and uplift than in former days, but chiefly because they do not find the needed uplift and guidance in the religious service as it is now administered in many of the churches. They find there, instead, too much conventionality, too much insistence upon things useless, outworn, and nonessential, too much that is abstract and theoretical, and too little that is practical and truly helpful and inspiring."

It is an easy generalization to make, and it sounds rather superior to say that the churches are "out of touch with the times," "behind the age," "not in adjustment to the needs and demands" of present life, fail to give "needed uplift and guidance," and insist too much on the useless, outworn, abstract, theoretical, and all that, and not enough on the practical and inspiring. But where is the proof of all this serious allegation? It seems to us like sheer dogmatism. May not the fault be quite as much with the world as with the Church? How can one jump at such conclusions as those quoted? That the churches are not perfect all must admit. That they need constantly to adjust themselves to new conditions is a truism. But they are realizing this and making the endeavor all the time. What the churches and the ministers want is *specific* intimation of defect in this and that particular, and a positive indication of how to remedy it.

There are many who allege that the prevalent tendency to bring reason to bear on questions of religion has operated to blight spirituality and freeze warm-hearted piety. But we cannot agree with their contention. It has been well said of the faculty of reason: "It is no part of religion to disparage it, or to thwart it, or to mortify it, or to humiliate it. It is the mission of religion to illuminate it, to help it and get help from it, and to give it a new play and power in life. It is divine in its original qualities and it has been assigned by the Creator to the headship over human life."

In their revolt against an unrestrained rationalism Christian thinkers have too broadly denied the function of reason in the province of religion. They

forget that Saint Paul has declared that the consecration of ourselves to God as living sacrifices is a reasonable, a logical, rational service. In his view, religion was neither mechanical nor sensational. God invites us to use our reasoning powers, saying, "Come, let us reason together." In his Revelation there are books in which Wisdom is personified as the companion of God who descends to dwell with men, to stand in the city's streets and market places to argue, urge, and plead. Jesus himself debated with the doctors of his time and, by gentle and prolonged education, unfolded the mysteries of the kingdom in the training of his disciples. Religion never presents itself, in his teaching, as a thing of arbitrary authority or of unmeaning ceremonial, but as a reasonable argument and claim.

Are scholars to-day throwing the searchlight of reason on the Scriptures as never before? There is nothing to fear; Christianity is the highest reasonableness. On its intellectual side, no one is asked to believe anything which is fundamentally unreasonable. In fact, he could not if he made the effort. Cardinal Vaughn in vain tried to compel Saint George Mivart to accept, on the authority of the Church, statements and interpretations which were an affront to his reason. The scientist found the task impossible, and refused. Even those mysteries which go beyond our present finite reason are still not unreasonable. They do not shock and confound reason. Reason follows their course a long way, and if she cannot trace their entire orbit, she is convinced that ultimately, if all were known, they would stand justified in her court. Christianity claims that if there is miracle, there is reason for miracle, and

miracle is reasonable. She affirms that if we could know all, the miraculous is the truly rational.

So all Christian theology is reasonable. The supernatural is not the negation of the natural—the unknown of the known. Revelation does not come to confound our thinking. Its office is not to destroy, but to fulfill. The Christian conception of God's relation to the universe is infinitely more reasonable than that of atheism and materialism, which involve our thought in absurdities, impossibilities, unthinkable propositions. There have been, indeed; ridiculous propositions put forth by theologians, but they were not true expositions of our Scriptures. A revelation, an incarnation, a resurrection—these have nothing in them that bring consternation to our logical faculties.

Christianity is no fanaticism nor superstition. Its apologists, like Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Augustine, Origen, Grotius, Lardner, Butler, Paley, Watson, Gladstone, Balfour, have vindicated their belief by appeal to intellectual proofs and convictions. What is there in its system at which reason revolts? Is it worship? Is it prayer? Is it love to God and man? Is it the specified moral and philanthropic duties?

Religion addresses itself to feeling, indeed, but fundamentally to intellect, conscience, and will. It puts our service of God as the dictate of the highest common sense. Its effort is not to work the emotions into an unthinking frenzy. It grounds itself on great truths as well as on great experiences. It does not seek its converts by enticing the rash, the silly, the light-headed, the fantastic. There would be small significance in a large body of weak and excit-

able men turning to embrace it. The real strength of a revival must be found, not simply in the excitement it has occasioned, but in the reasons it has furnished men for the faith that is in them. It has done its work well if it has been able to make them see that there is nothing finer or higher than an imitation of Jesus: to go about like him doing good, to follow, living or dying, his glorious example; to discern that this is the only true life, life at its best, the life that was made for God, and which is restless until it reposes in him; that man's life, otherwise, is imperfect, undeveloped, deficient.

Apart from God there is no true self-realization—we come to ourselves, like the prodigal, when we come to the Father. We can arrive at no other conclusion than that to love him and serve him is right, true, and our bounden duty. We ought to answer God's efforts at self-revelation. As Creator, Law-giver, Deliverer, Father he presents himself to us in the most reasonable as well as the most pathetic lights. The life and sufferings of Jesus justify themselves to our deepest thought as the highest sanity.

Jesus never used demagogic methods to persuade men. His earnestness, gravity, and sweet reasonableness, his forcible presentation of great truths and tremendous motives for diviner living—these are the chief characteristics of his speech. If they seemed to have small effect at times, he was never discouraged, never descended to sensationalism. If conversions seem to be too few to-day, we shall not mend the situation by trying to stampede men like the swine of Gadara—by flying to claptrap and senseless harangues. The great revivals conducted by such men as Wesley, Whitefield, Finney, and

Moody were full of thought and doctrine and patient teaching. Of course we do not want a "barren intellectualism." We hear a good deal about the intellect being "cold and icy," but heart can warm brain, and brain can inform heart. We are told that, to-day, if we would get men into the Church we must hypnotize them—stimulate them to act impulsively and unreflectingly. No, the problem is just the opposite—how to get men, in this complex and rushing age, to really *think* and *reason* about the supreme affairs of their souls.

CHAPTER IX

REVIVAL POWER IN THE CHURCH

SELDOM do we stop to think of the far-reaching blessings of a great religious awakening. We rejoice over the salvation for time and eternity of immortal souls—over rescue from loss and self-destruction and preservation to the eternal life of holiness and beneficent character. We see the direct results in accessions to the Church, and the multiplication of helpers in all benevolent church activities. But the kingdom of God receives acceleration and uplift at every point. The home feels the effect of the new life immediately. Husbands, wives, and children are in every way benefited. Their relations are purified and sanctified. Perhaps for many generations to come the influence of a single conversion may be felt in the heredity, impress, and instruction bequeathed to descendants.

Society is directly affected. Men are made better neighbors, old feuds are reconciled, and there are more kindness and self-sacrifice in all the connections of life. All philanthropies are quickened by the new energies with which transformed hearts infuse them. Humanitarianism would die without this constantly recurring vitalization of religion. Reforms would lack incentive and power of execution if souls, renewed in Christlikeness, did not empty their enthusiasms into them. Zeal for law and order would degenerate into cant unless fed by a mighty conviction of righteousness born of repentance, a

strong loathing of sin, a regeneration, an enamored contemplation of the majestic purity of God and his Son. After every great awakening colleges have had increased attendance and theological seminaries gather more candidates for the ministry. All business and commerce are touched and molded. Drunkards and vagrants become workers; wasters, producers. Men, shaped anew by the Holy Spirit, and lifted to higher levels of sobriety, self-control, and conscientious fidelity in labor and contracts, as workmen and employers manifest the practical character of their spiritual energizing. Both as captains of industry and as employees they are made more considerate of each other, and their relationships become fraternal and coöperative.

City and nation are borne upward and forward upon the crest-waves of great spiritual inflowing tides. Converted men are strangely moved by the calls of patriotism so akin to religion, by the demand of a higher idealism in municipal life and party administration, by the necessity of rebuking organized evils and establishing justice and civic purity. Thus political reformation and the new order of loftier citizenship wait upon the soul's transformation by the Spirit. As religion permeates all life—domestic, social, educational, artistic, industrial, governmental—so a great revival floods every department of being with its tremendous purifications. For the sake of a higher individualism, a sanctified hearth-stone, nobler social standards, a larger sympathy and helpfulness, the rectification of wrongs, abuses, and public immoralities, more equitable and brotherly bonds between labor and capital, let us strive and look to God in persistent prayer for the

general revival which is needed everywhere as much as in the Church, and which city, State, and nation, in their increasing powers and responsibilities, must have unless they would miserably perish.

After a State election in New York a citizen of Rochester sent a letter to the *Democrat and Chronicle* on "The Election and the Revival," and that liberal-minded paper published it in full. As it contains a clear and vigorous statement of principles which are of general application outside of New York State, we give generous extracts from it. The writer said:

"A revival of personal religion, a deepening of the sense of God and the guilt of sin, would mean a revival of civic and industrial righteousness, and the weakest spots in our national life are our civic governments and industrial unrighteousness. The business man is in the meshes of a great industrial system which many personally repudiate, but which no one personally can break through. Men feel they cannot square their lives by the standards of Christ because they must play the same game their competitors play. What only can cure industrial wrongs is a new sense of God. And they are in imminent need of cure.

"I do not fear the socialistic movement—I am a Christian socialist myself. But I do fear what the movement indicates, which is that there is suspicion and ill will between employers and employees, between the possessing class and the laboring class; that one class feels the other has not played fair, which is true, for both have played false; that the working-man feels he has not gotten the just share of his earnings, which in many cases is true. The great

common people feel that something is wrong and they have set themselves to its righting. Our peril is not in this uprising of socialism, but in the real wrongs which have induced the movement.

"We cannot right these wrongs single-handed. A democracy cannot endure without brotherhood, but no one man can apply the principle of brotherhood to his business, for he is part of a vast system. No single man can succeed in business by the Golden Rule when all his competitors are working by the iron rule of greed. What only can right these wrongs is a new sense of God in our common daily life; God at the door of the office and store and factory, demanding that all men do justly and love mercy and walk humbly before him. The real wrongs against which the wave of socialism is beating grow out of a low *morale* in industrial life; some men forget God when they enter their office or shop. And to criticize idly any earnest, intelligent, loving effort to raise our moral standards and heighten the sense of God is either ignorance or infidelity. The cause of Christ in this country needs a mighty thrusting forward just now. And what a truly masterful campaign did for the politics of the State a really masterful campaign will do for righteousness in our city. By arresting men's attention and turning their hearts to God, God will have a fair chance in their lives."

Dr. Alexander McLaren, of England, says: "It will be a good day for all the churches when their members ask themselves whether they are doing the work for which they are established by their Lord, if they fail in winning men to be his, and whether Christ will be satisfied if, when he asks them why they have not

carried out his commands to take his gospel to those around them who are without it, they answer, 'Lord, we were so busy studying deep theological questions, arguing about the validity of critical inquiries as to the dates of the books of the Bible, preaching and hearing eloquent discourses, comforting and edifying one another, that we had to leave the Christless masses alone.' " The good Doctor would rouse the conscience of the Church to feel that it is to be the messenger of glad tidings first of all, whatever else it may be in addition. He suggests that there are very many who, though they may have neither learning nor eloquence, since they have the knowledge of One who has saved them, and desires to save others, have a definite duty in seeking the unsaved.

Who can really doubt that Dr. McLaren has put the emphasis just where it belongs in our Christian work? The Church cannot be an end in itself; to support its services, to meet the current expenses, to pay the preacher, the choir, the janitor—these cannot be the ultimate things. There must, indeed, be much preaching which is for the building up of the saints. But the trouble to-day is that the saints are getting more than their share; too exclusively the preaching is the beautiful and helpful elaboration of some fine doctrine for their benefit. Doubtless they need the direction and comfort they thus receive. They might fall back into worldliness—at least they might not advance in grace as they should—unless they had these numerous sermons. And yet, does it not sometimes look a trifle ludicrous and incongruous that good, cultured, pious people—with all the help that heredity, environment, established habit, the support of Christian society, can give for

virtue—get so much, and “poor sinners,” with a bad lineage, base surroundings, vicious tendencies, and wicked associates, so comparatively little?

One might think that the Church people could possibly get along and be tolerably good without so much overfeeding, and let the unevangelized have some of the message. Some churches are gospel-logged—soaked and saturated and penetrated in every pore with sound doctrine—but there have been very few conversions in them for years, and the members would hardly know how to act if they should see somebody under conviction. Surely the command of Christ to make disciples, to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded, was not simply a foreign missionary exhortation. It was as much for us and those right around us; and lo, he is with us always, even unto the end of the world!

Certain it is that the times call loudly for reform. But as Wesley proved conclusively, the best way to accomplish reforms is to labor for the intensification and vitalization of the religious life. In the community outside there is a certain world-weariness—a reaction against an overdone mammonism and a mad devotion to earthly pleasures and gains. Thousands of men would welcome a fresh exhibition of a fervent religiousness in public and private life.

The religion of Christ has not lost its old-time efficiency. The Rev. S. F. Collier, of Manchester, England, has spoken most convincingly on “The Miracle of Changed Lives,” as it has come under his observation in his mission. At the prison gate, in the slum, in lodging houses, in the streets, he has

sought the needy and the lost. This is Christianity in practice and is putting to a very real test its power to save. The results furnished the strongest arguments in its favor. The healed man has always been the best apologist for Christianity. Mr. Collier does not depreciate other arguments. He welcomes the reasoning of great intellects, and the confirmatory evidence of clever scientists, but the miracle of changed lives is, to his mind, the most powerful proof of the reality and truth of our faith. From the brothel to purity of life, from the gin-palace to sobriety, from the gambler's hell to honesty, from prison to respectable citizenship, from greed and cruelty to generosity and kindness—these are changes which ought to bring conviction to every man whose doubt is honest and sincere. Such changes are not wrought by human power. They are not the creations of a fevered brain. Culture, education, ideal conditions of life may do much, but they are powerless to accomplish such reforms. Supernatural power alone can produce such results. All systems, social, political, religious, must stand the final test of practical efficiency. Christianity challenges and welcomes the test. Let the agnostic, the atheist, the unbeliever produce like results in saved drunkards, rescued harlots, restored prodigals, reformed homes. To them we will say, "This rod has budded; let the magicians do the same with theirs!" And what Christianity has proved itself powerful to do for the lowest and worst classes of humanity it can certainly do for those in better surroundings, with better heredity, better talents, and education.

Sometimes it is felt that our modern culture is putting a damper on evangelistic zeal. But consecrated

culture ought to be one of the most helpful of all allies in bringing men to Christ. This truth has been most frankly and forcibly stated by a recent writer who says: "Nothing is more needed in the evangelistic sermon than sound fundamental brain-work. Such a sermon should have superior and outstanding qualities of its own, such as pungency, directness, cogency of appeal, force of persuasion; but it will never influence the thoughtful unless it has sound fundamental brain-work. The evangelist will gain immensely in power by being also a thinker. This is one of the lessons of Wesley's life, which has been strangely overlooked. It is a lesson that we have to relearn. Wesley was a clear, logical thinker, and, from the merely intellectual point of view, a great preacher, yet he was the greatest of evangelists. Can we refuse the deduction that evangelism has everything to gain and nothing to lose by the closest possible alliance with culture? And in the conditions of our own time, with its constantly rising standard of education, is not the union of culture with evangelism absolutely necessary if evangelism is once more to become a national force?"

Let, then, our ministers summon their very best—their highest thoughts, their profoundest reflections and arguments, wrought out in the quiet of the study and in communion with the greatest Christian thinkers in their books; let them fuse all in the heat of a mighty love for men and an overmastering conviction of the power of the gospel to save, and then let them plead for decision, speaking as living men unto living men.

There have been great periods of revival in learning. The Renaissance prepared the way for the

Reformation. The past century saw a great outburst of scientific discovery. In America art is beginning its revival. There are times of ebb and flow in business life, and years of great depression are followed by periods of wonderful prosperity. This law of periodicity has obtained in religion. The age of faith has been succeeded by an age of dogma. The molten beliefs have run themselves into molds and stiffened. Intellectual assent and barren orthodoxy have taken the place of a vital experience. Then there must come the reaction, the reawakening, the revival.

The course of religion is not that of an uninterrupted advance. The opposing powers of worldliness sometimes seem to obstruct it temporarily, until it gathers renewed momentum to sweep down all barriers. The movements under Moses, Ezra, John the Baptist, the apostles, Savonarola, the preaching friars, Huss, Wiclif, Luther, Knox, the Puritans, Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Bellamy, the Tennysons, Finney, Knapp, and Moody are, historically, abundant evidence of the recurrence of great tidal waves of the Spirit.

The last century opened in a condition of religious paucity and stagnation far more alarming than anything that faces us now. Infidelity was prevalent and fashionable. French modes of unbelief were greedily adopted. The colleges were hotbeds of atheism and irreligion. The churches were dead. The people everywhere seemed indifferent. Some churches had not known a revival in the twenty-five, fifty, or hundred years of their life. Coarseness of life and immorality were on the increase. Christianity was regarded as a fable, the future life as a

delusion. But God had mercy on our country. Sweeping revivals broke out in Kentucky camp meetings, and, spreading through the West, rescued it from infidelity and the neglect of the gospel and the soul's needs.

In intellectual New England the deadness of formal respectability was vivified with new life. There, and across the Alleghenies, the new converts multiplied the membership of the Congregational Churches by two, of the Baptists by three, of the Presbyterians by four, and of the Methodists by seven. The whole religious condition of the colleges was completely transformed. In the first thirty years of the century there were twenty great revivals. In 1831 there were nine hundred conversions in the staid city of New Haven. Fifteen hundred other towns counted up fifty thousand converts in five months. Great city churches were founded, and consecrated young men flocked to the colleges and offered themselves for the Christian ministry. Great foreign missionary societies sprang into existence. In 1837, in Hawaii, seventy-three hundred were converted. In 1858, after the feeling of the insecurity and vanity of property following the panic of 1852, it is estimated that half a million people turned to their Saviour. Since our Civil War the great meetings conducted by Dwight L. Moody and the rise of the young people's societies have manifested the presence of the Spirit. In 1878 twenty-thousand of the Telugees were converted, and a like marvelous movement is still going on among other East Indian populations, and is specially manifested now among the Koreans.

At present, standing in the second decade of a

new century, feeling the pressing need of some new and marvelous exhibition of divine life, all the churches everywhere are in a prayerful and expectant attitude. A feeling is taking possession of all that ere long the great deeps of human life shall be profoundly stirred. All the churches are coming together to pray unitedly and plan concertedly. Though the minds of our American people seem to be taken up with the new dreams of expansion, with pride over our place among the great powers in the counsels of the earth, where shall we get, except from a new and wonderful vitalization of Christianity among us, the moral and spiritual strength for our new duties and increased responsibilities? Let us not be deceived. We shall in no wise be saved by our big populations, our gigantic growth of cities, our stronger army and navy, our enlarging wealth and civilization. The greater we are, the more we need evangelization. The present crisis calls aloud for it. There is always a power of greed, political corruption, human selfishness and vice at work, and in some centers they seem particularly strong just at present. Unless counteracted by fresh spiritual forces the degradation of the nation is certain and imminent.

Let us be thoroughly convinced that faith in Christ is still the power of God unto salvation and is equal to the great work our vast, complex civilization throws upon it. God is not, for some mysterious reason, unwilling to send a twentieth-century Pentecost. He is not holding himself out of reach. He is "always on the giving hand." He is always ready to act. If there are stoppages and hindrances to his grace, the fault is in men; and it behooves us to dis-

cover where the obstructions are, both in ourselves and in unregenerate hearts, and unite to remove them as far as human agency can.

God's Spirit is always in need of human coöperation. In prayer meetings we have fervent supplications for conversions. Then those who have prayed leave the church and imagine they have done all. There should be more petitions for their own outfitting for labor. Jesus told his disciples to pray that God would send laborers into his vineyard. Then, in answer to their own prayers, they were sent out themselves. Would it not be well if we could hear some such prayers as this?—"Lord, I here dedicate myself to thy service, to help convert some one to thee, and I promise to do my duty faithfully. Here am I, Lord; send me."

We thoroughly believe in the statements and arguments of those who plead for a "revival all the year 'round"—in June as well as in January. We are convinced that there ought to be many more opportunities given for religious decision than are customary—invitations following every warm-hearted evangelical sermon throughout the course of the year. For a long time, when pastor of downtown churches, we pursued this plan. We asked, after the sermon, for persons holding church letters to present them, and for people to take that opportunity of accepting the vows of religion. Generally there was some response—sometimes of those expected, sometimes of others. This might not happen in a country church or the family church of a city, but such invitations, we think, are rarely amiss. The fathers had a good phrase—"casting the net"—and we feel that more of our ministers ought to

practice more frequently this most essential part of the fisherman's craft.

But while piety ought to be a thing of normal growth and healthy vigor always, and not a spasmodic thing, with intervals of sickliness and declension, it is rational to set aside some seasons of the year when particular attention should be paid to its culture. Many pastors and church workers are apt to estimate the results of any revival efforts lasting several weeks exclusively by the number of converts, and if there is no large ingathering, they feel disappointed and depressed, and admit to each other that all their services were in vain. But this is to ignore other aspects that certainly ought to make the meetings seem worth while, and, indeed, productive of the highest good.

Has not the pastor himself been awakened to a more deeply religious life, and will not this effect be made practically manifest in the more spiritual character of his pastoral work, and in the more fervent and searching evangelistic note in his preaching? There is a too common conception that the minister is always naturally, and of course, possessed of abounding and overflowing piety. But he is as human as any of his parishioners, and, in these days, when he is anything but a recluse, but has to be in the thick of all public movements, and to conduct scores of practical church enterprises, there is a great drain on nervous force, and he has more than ordinary trials and temptations. For one whose physical, mental, sympathetic, and moral resources are being drawn on so perpetually and exhaustively there is undeniable need of reënforcement from above. He preaches to others and must needs also

preach to himself in the lack of sitting before other pulpits. He ministers to others, but who shall be his minister? It would be well if some devout brother would sometimes call at the parsonage and pray with and for his pastor. In the Protestant Episcopal and some other churches the clergy occasionally conduct "retreats," during which, for a season, the ministers gather and seek by meditation, prayer, and conference to realize a richer soul life. Likewise, pastors of other churches, in their Ministerial Associations or local Conferences, have occasionally held such sessions, and, without too much introspection or emphasis on asceticism, they have been greatly benefited thereby. Who can doubt that, if the preacher's public prayers take on a more yearning tone; if his sermons reveal a quickening of vital truth in himself, the displacement of any possible formality or deadened spiritual discernment by something real and dynamic from above, the return again and again to the warm-hearted evangelistic appeal—who can doubt, in view of this single great advantage, that the revival has "paid"?

And in the Church are there not others besides the minister who would not be harmed by larger accessions of earnest piety? Are there not many church members who almost inevitably gather the dust of the world about their souls and need the washing of another regeneration? Sometimes we think it wonderful that even professing Christians keep as near Christ as they do. All the week they are played upon by the duties, labors, responsibilities, and cares of the world which occupies and absorbs them, and weighs them down with its accumulations. Their minds are frayed, their spirits burdened, and their

consciences tempted by the constantly pressing-in distractions, inducements, and temptations of their environment. Not once, but often, during the year do they need refreshment and reinvigoration. They ought to get no little of it every Sunday from the stated services, and the regular recharging of the batteries ought to be supplemented by special seasons for the renewal of the inner consciousness of the Divine—the experience of Christ and his grace. And any revival “pays” that stirs up anew that grace within their hearts.

Do not the officers of the Church, in particular, need this reviving, and are they not great gainers by it? They carry the financial and material burdens of the Church. Much of their time is given to committee work that is not specially inspiring, but sometimes rather depressing. There is little in it all which helps them in their devotions and religiousness. It may sometimes operate in making them almost unconsciously think of the Church as simply a piece of machinery which must be kept going, just like any business or corporation. Any revival which shall bless the official members, make them feel a joy, and not a monotony, in their labors, as if by them they served the Lord Christ, lead them to fresh consecrations and more satisfactory evidences of the Holy Spirit's presence, within the heart of even the most “practical” and businesslike deacon, trustee, or steward—any revival which has done that has obviously “paid,” and paid big dividends.

Then there are the backsliders of various grades in every church. Some are still coming to the Sunday service, but only as a custom or a respectability, and have lost their first love; others have ceased

altogether their church attendance. Sometimes we have heard pastors speak almost contemptuously and sarcastically of backsliders, as if they were "black sheep," deserving scorn rather than sympathy; as if they should rightfully receive the Church's taboo; as if they were traitors to be stigmatized. But, certainly, backsliding is no unforgivable offense. It is too common and "respectable" to mark the offender as an ecclesiastical outcast. We have all at times backslidden more or less. But if all the backsliders in any church could be brought back into the fold by evangelistic efforts, what a glorious consummation that would be! And, in hundreds of cases, if the pastors and church workers would take advantage of the previous religious experiences of these brethren and sisters, and lovingly urge them to renew their covenants and open their hearts again to the old peace and joy they once knew, they would be successful. Some, indeed, owing to some unfortunate trouble in the church, might be bitter and resentful; and some, imagining the Church all wrong, may have taken up some anti-Christian doctrine or new-fangled fad; but many, very many, would be found approachable and susceptible to the right influences. And any revival which would convert over again these hundreds of the "lapsed" would abundantly prove that it "paid."

We do not write in this vein as if new converts were not one of the main reasons for holding revival services. And when they come there is rightfully great rejoicing. But we do write it to say emphatically that, even when these cannot be honestly counted, the revival is not to be considered *nil* and

time and labor wasted. Every earnest effort in this direction has outcomes and recompenses that can never be tabulated or appraised.

In seeking to reach others and bring them into the life of religion, both minister and people are mightily benefited. The net results of such services are not all summed up in the number of conversions, few or many, among those without. The pastor, preaching upon the fundamental themes of the gospel, has had his own faith and feeling wonderfully freshened. His people have listened to the restatement of the great primary Bible truths and truths of life which have been as a tonic to their religious systems. The quickened current of devotion makes its pulse felt in larger and more attentive congregations on the Sabbath and in bigger and better prayer meetings. And these effects are not transitory. We have known instances where the prayer service, thus stimulated, maintained its attendance and temperature throughout the year. Many were brought into it and to the public worship who had long shown indifference and lived a perfunctory Christian life. In every church there are not a few who in reality need "converting over again." To reclaim these and get them thoroughly influenced by and interested in the religious life and permanently attached to the Church and its work is quite as important as the winning of new recruits for Christ.

Many who describe themselves as "belonging to the Church by marriage"—whose wives or husbands may belong—are affected, converted, and enlist as good soldiers of the cross. Many who have been coming regularly to the public services for years, and who at heart are religious and Christian, but

who have never "taken a stand," are persuaded to come out openly on the Lord's side. Many of the young people in the families of the Church find the hour of their opportunity to pledge themselves to Christ in such helpful meetings. Consequently, we believe that whatever the census of converts among the openly irreligious, worldly, and godless, such special services pay large dividends even in the results within the Church. A pastor who thinks he is not an evangelist because he has had small success in inducing confessedly wicked men to forsake sin and become Christ's followers, ought to yield to no discouragement as long as there is such fruitage to his ministry as we have described.

There are few pastors who have not had experience with a class of men in their churches who are conveniently described as "moral men." The pastor knows them as well as any people in the parish, is as intimate with them, and likes them quite as well. Generally, they are the husbands of church members. They themselves come regularly to all the church services and support the Church with constant and cheerful payments. They are evidently interested in religion and the Church; but they are not on the roll of membership, and have never "given in their names." How shall they be regarded? As having no spirituality, no knowledge of God? As formalists? As having no other inspiration for conduct than a coldly philosophical ethical code? Perhaps, in some occasional instances, one or all of these representations may be true; but, sometimes, none of them meet the facts. The pastor who is wise enough, in familiar and friendly conversation, to discover how these men feel, will often find to his

joy a real acquaintance with God, a piety vital if not fervent, and comparable in quality to that of his average members. For reasons often slight—generally some personal difference—these men have not united with God's people, and therein are blameworthy. But it cannot be denied that they are real and essential Christians, and something better than "merely moral men," as the phrase is used in a loose and slighting sense. They need to be talked with affectionately and persuaded of their duty. In a revival service, when the thoughts, ideals, conduct, and life of the sinner, alienated from God and disobeying his commands continually, are portrayed, they do not feel themselves described or indicated, and there is therefore no response. They need to be approached and won in a different way.

The so-called "moral men" of to-day—men who, though, for one reason or another, not connected with the Church, are still the best of neighbors, the most honorable of business men, the most reputable of citizens in all civic relations—are very different from those of a former century who were thus designated. In the last of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, "moral men" generally strove to govern their lives by rules, precepts, and formulas. Like Franklin, Jefferson, and others, they would draw up codes for the regulation of their private conduct and try to work to them. The book of Proverbs was one of the most quoted of the Bible books, and the wise saws of "Poor Richard's Almanac" and of Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" (which ran into its fortieth edition) were vastly popular. It was difficult to appeal to men under the sway of this species of legalism.

But now all that has changed. None—not even “moral men”—think of regulating their lives by moral codifications and painfully numbered rules. They have accepted certain great principles and ideals of living, and are guiding themselves by them. These fundamental principles are, in the main, those of the Christian religion. They are based on a belief in God and his judgments, and on a general knowledge and acceptance of the teachings of the Scriptures and of Christian preachers and moralists. The inner conscience of the age is broadly Christian whenever it asserts itself.

Consequently, it would seem as if there were in existence a much more favorable basis of appeal to men who, on the side of morality, are essentially Christian, in behalf of a definite culture of the particular spiritual half of their natures, and for an identification with and participation in specific religious work in building up the kingdom of heaven.

But, perhaps, there is still another class who furnish the greatest trial to the faith of a pastor in the necessity and efficiency of revivals. We refer to those who may be described as “rootless Christians.” The parable of the sower is one which is of special interest to every Christian minister. He has to deal with all the classes so graphically and penetratingly described by Jesus. No people, perhaps, give him more concern than those illustrated by the seeds that “fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.” Such auditors hear the word and straightway with joy receive it;

yet they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while. The soil was spread thinly over an underlying stratum of rock which heated quickly and induced rapid growth, but could furnish no rootage.

Such quickly responsive but shallow and unenduring characters are the perplexity and despair of every Christian worker. They start so well; they are so enthusiastic and give such glorious promise that they raise the most exuberant hopes. They do so finely for a little while that the pastor congratulates himself and them upon such splendid conversions. And then, all at once, they give up and go to pieces. They have no staying power. They are easily discouraged and they discourage everybody else. They bring disheartenment to faithful ministers and to their fellow converts. They commenced with a dash, they "were running well," as Paul said to the Galatians, and then, on a sudden, they turn back to the "weak and beggarly rudiments" of worldliness.

Jesus must have had much experience with superficial characters who followed him for a little time, and then, when they heard some "hard saying," turned back and walked no more with him. They came to him with the bravest assurance that they would follow him whithersoever he went, but they were not able to stand the simplest testing. They had thin, emotional, mercurial, irresolute temperaments, easily swayed this way and that, and they had a fundamental lack of ballasting in intellect and will. They heard those commandments of Christ, they warmly commended them for their truth and reasonableness, and then they went off and entirely failed to observe them. A little less fulsome ap-

proval and a little more quiet obedience and fulfillment would have been much more welcome. They were like men building houses on the sands.

But Jesus did not allow himself to lose heart or hope through the instability and inconstancy of these volatile disciples. For them too, in their weakness and changeableness, he must have had a great compassion. Their souls were as needful of being saved as those of any. He must have had an infinite patience with them in their waywardness and vacillation, in the hope of finally anchoring them in stable convictions, enduring faith, and lasting loyalty.

Every pastor must reckon with a large proportion of such temperaments in every revival, and he must not allow himself to be either unduly elated over the extravagant promise nor unreasonably depressed over the disappointing outcome of such conversions. It is a common observation that, in every work of grace, there are a certain number in every community who are regularly converted at the opening services of each revival season, and then as systematically fall away after a little. Of course the temptation of earnest ministers and other believers is to give way to something of a pitying contempt for such weak brothers and sisters, and to designate them as "feather-weights" who are scarcely worth more attention. But even these must be borne with, labored with constantly in love, in the hope of ultimately establishing them in grace.

Such surface stirrings of human hearts are not the results entirely of any merely shilly-shally methods of any sensational preachers or evangelists. They happen quite as frequently during the faithful labors

of the most devoted pastors and the most approved and unexceptional evangelists.

It was our fortune at one time to be appointed to a church which had been once served by one of the best evangelistic preachers the Methodist Episcopal Church has had in recent times. His whole heart was in the work day and night, and he loved souls with a veritable passion. He was on the trail of men all the time, seeking their salvation. During the three years of his pastorate some four hundred conversions or more were reported. And yet, when one looked for these on the church membership roll, only a handful of them could be found. Other pastors had not been able to bring them into the Church fold to remain there. What might have happened if Doctor P. could have remained we cannot say. We attempted to win back to participation in church life and religious experience many who were on the church register or in the probationers' lists, but without much avail. They had not been to the church, they said, "since Doctor P.'s time." The reiterated phrase at last became as monotonous as that of "befo' the wah" down South. Indeed, we found it easier to win fresh converts than to get back these who had once made their profession, but who had quickly grown cold and indifferent.

Others followed Doctor P., some of the most notable evangelistic preachers, who brought to their help other noted evangelists and left lists on the church books of two or three hundred converts. But the same thing happened again, and the question of "What becomes of our probationers?" was surely an acute one there. These remarks are not intended by us to cast any reflection or to mean any dispar-

agement upon these worthy and justly honored and beloved men. We are speaking of an inevitable condition which faces even the best workers and for which all should prepare themselves. It must be reckoned with everywhere. It is one of the hardest problems any pastor has to solve—how to be patient with these fickle, unstable, and trying converts, how to sympathize with their weakness and waverings, how to strengthen them in purpose, will, and fidelity.

And even a profounder problem is started by this discussion: It is comparatively easy to stir the sensibilities of the thin-soiled person with not much depth to his nature and with little chance for the truth to find abiding rootage. But will it not require a more thoughtful preaching, a more careful and reasonable putting of the truth, a more considerate study, reflection, and dealing to bring to Christ those of more serious and tenacious and less fluttering and capricious minds, those who act slowly after long consideration and only under stress of deep conviction, but who remain stanch to the end? The test of a successful revival is in the number of such who have been turned permanently into the good way. These are the good-ground hearers who listen to the message, and understand it, and really produce fruit. They are not to be won by any mechanical inventions, by any religious claptrap. But the gaining of one such is a victory for Christ to be gloried in. And that is a great revival wherein even a score or less of such are bound forever to a faithful following of the Master.

CHAPTER X

THE PREACHER AND THE REVIVAL

To awaken souls lying dormant, to vivify the comatose, is the great function of the preacher. Out of the true minister there flows a life-giving current which stimulates into new activity. He cannot create, but he can resuscitate. Browning depicts how the poet makes dead facts live again. Projecting into them his "surplusage of soul," breathing on and reluming the "half-burned-out, all but quite-quenched wicks o' the lamp stationed for temple-service on this earth," he

Makes new beginnings, starts the dead alive,
Completes the incomplete, and saves the thing.

He then compares the marvel wrought by the poet to the miracle performed by the ancient prophet. His description might well apply to the utter giving of his own vitality by a pastor in the communication of moral and spiritual life to those lying dead in trespasses and sins, or half-dead in soul lethargy:

Was not Elisha once?—

Who bade them lay his staff on a corpse-face.
There was no voice, no hearing; he went in
Therefore, and shut the door upon them twain,
And prayed unto the Lord: and he went up
And lay upon the corpse, dead on the couch,
And put his mouth upon its mouth, his eyes
Upon its eyes, his hands upon its hands,
And stretched him on the flesh; the flesh waxed warm;
And he returned, walked to and fro the house,
And went up, stretched him on the flesh again,
And the eyes opened. 'Tis a credible feat
With the right man and way.

A mission preacher of the Protestant Episcopal Church has expressed himself strongly on the subject of conviction and conversion. He believes that the nerve of any spiritual weakness of the Church is the neglect on the part of its clergy to preach the doctrine of sin and repentance. "There can be no question," he thinks, "that superficial views of sin constitute an insuperable barrier to the understanding of the gospel of Christ, and the fact that 'the modern view of the world,' as it is called, is so largely inimical to any profound appreciation of the radical nature of sin ought to arouse the ministers of Jesus Christ to a more strenuous presentation of the Christian view."

His own experience in conducting his mission is stated in these strong terms: "The faithful and *repeated* presentation from the pulpit of the Bible view of sin—its nature, its consequences, its penalty—followed by the preaching of the cross, as God's remedy for sin, and of repentance and faith as the divine method of realizing the benefit of the great redemption, uniformly produces 'great searching of heart,' and issues in the awakening of men and women to new spiritual life, or else to a deeper and more vital Christian experience." Has not this been the testimony from the very beginning? Sometimes certain ministers are referred to as "not believing in revivals," and it may be that there are those who have so characterized themselves. But it is difficult to think that any true minister would use such unqualified language. He, as well as laymen who so speak, probably has in mind certain aspects of so-called revivals which offend him in method and results, and do not seem to be accompanied by any

permanent moral or religious improvement. There have been "evangelists" of self-advertisement, who adopted mechanical and eccentric procedures. It might look as if they cared more for numbers than for the reality of conversions. They easily move the volatile, but drive away the more thoughtful and serious.

While deep feeling and profound excitement are normal in a great religious awakening, it is an act of folly to try to work up an assembly into a senseless hysteria no more resembling piety than the catalepsies of the Indian fakirs. The evangelist of the future will, we believe, combine in due proportion the appeals to reason, conscience, emotion, and spiritual faculty and need. But we cannot dictate the ways of the Spirit. Doubtless there will be conformity to the new needs of a new age. But we must always be prepared for surprises. The winds of God blow where they list. However the twentieth century Pentecost may come, let it come.

It is undoubtedly true that some preachers are preëminently teachers rather than evangelists. The Scriptures recognize the distinctions in the gifts of the Spirit. But direct evangelism ought never to be put aside by these as something in which they have no interest or concern. There is a place, without question, in the Church and under its authorization, for an order of evangelists. They must be men of unquestioned piety, skilled in presenting the truth, powerful in appeal, in the best sense tactful and resourceful, right in doctrine, and free from repellent eccentricities and inconsistencies. Yet each pastor ought to feel for himself a desire for the conversion of those in his congregation and circle of

acquaintances, whom he knows and loves, more natural and fervent than could any evangelist, however sincere, coming in as a stranger and soon to depart.

Many preachers, as they compare themselves with the early Puritan divines who had such blood-earnestness, who preached with the pungency and fearlessness of the ancient prophets, who yearned in pain over the souls of men, and felt poignantly afflicted when any died out of the peace of God—many to-day are longing to feel the same burden and passion. They are convinced that the preaching of the last half century has been too exclusively confined, even to repletion, to those already in the Church. This has worked to keep away the unconverted who might have come. They were not addressed. Their need was seldom spoken to. If they had any serious thought, it was never caught by anything in the sermon.

Much sensationalism has gradually crept into many pulpits. The criterion of success has been the ability to draw a crowd. If any minister start out with the dominant idea of being pleasing, if he throw out baits for applause, if his foremost thought is popularity, there will be little real earnestness in his exhortations. He will be more absorbed in selecting "catchy" sermon-titles and turning pretty phrases and witty paragraphs to win a smile or compliment therewith than to grapple with men's consciences and bring them face to face with duty and God. Such a man is doomed to vulgarize his ministry from the start. Verily he has his reward; but it is not that of an ambassador of Christ searching hearts and speaking as though Christ himself did entreat.

Then, too, the thought of the modern pastor is drawn off into a hundred other channels of discussion—sociological, philanthropic, municipal, national, educational, reformatory—all of them important, and having a direct bearing on applied Christianity. But it is possible to preëempt every Sabbath in the year as some cause's day. There must really be more time for that direct consideration of the main purpose of the gospel—to save men's souls from going down into hell and to bring them here and now into the consciousness of being sons of God. The old preachers kept to the great themes of the Bible. Life is too short to cover the whole range of the encyclopedia in the pulpit. Ministers must rigidly choose their themes and texts in order to concentrate on the fundamental propositions.

In some quarters it has been boldly affirmed that the religion of the future is to express itself exclusively in intellectual forms. But this thought, which would bar out the emotions, has no place among our evangelical churches. Radicals who have tried to nourish the spirits of men on negations of what they styled "the outworn orthodox conceptions," who gave theological or scientific philosophizings or literary disquisitions on moral themes, have had only a barren outcome. Revivals do not proceed out of such a cold, unspiritualized atmosphere any more than roses bloom on the Muir Glacier.

There is no inconsiderable number of pastors in every evangelical communion who feel somehow a lack of ability to conduct successful revival services. It is not that they are not interested in the conversion of men; not that they would not gladly be instrumental at any cost in leading men from their sins to

their Saviour. They secretly bewail their inaptitude for a work that they admit frankly is indispensable, and envy the gifts of others by which many are brought into the kingdom. They are thoroughly convinced of the truth and reasonableness of the position so often affirmed that every preacher ought to be also an evangelist, continually winning men to Christ. And yet they have to sadly confess to themselves that they do not know how to do it, at least in the conventional methods—that their genius does not serve them, try as they may.

These men are usually those of a rather wide culture and of a very reflective turn of mind. Whenever they take up any Scripture text for explanation and enforcement the sermon almost inevitably runs itself into philosophical molds. In their minds it quite invariably connects itself with the findings of men of former times and with the thought and reason of all thinkers in every field of human investigation and activity. It naturally seeks enforcement and illustration in the rich regions of literature and poetry with which their minds are familiar. They employ these quotations, not merely for the sake of being literary or of furnishing embellishment to their discourses. They are convinced that they all help to make the truth more attractive and persuasive. Their particular segment of truth, which they are trying to enforce, is seen to fit into and to be a part of the universal truth and truths of all ages, and so to gain a vast assurance of reasonableness.

And yet it must be acknowledged that such sermons are somewhat too elaborate and ornate to bring men to a decision about their sins and to draw them Christward. The appeal that is to waken men to

repentance must be something more direct than that—something that shall touch the emotions while it moves directly on the will and stirs the conscience profoundly. The preacher feels himself, at times, that he must guard his tendency to philosophize over Christian doctrines and biblical texts, and indulge more in heart-to-heart exhortation. But he is still held back from it.

Furthermore, he is restrained from speaking directly to men privately about their souls by some sort of a reticence which arises in part from a feeling of respect and reverence for the innermost privacies of the individual. He cannot bring himself to intrude within the sacred sanctuary of men's hearts unless invited. Doubtless he ought to overcome such a feeling, but with him it is an instinct that asserts itself powerfully and which he thinks ought to be heeded. At least he finds himself utterly unable to cultivate that blustering familiarity that comes up to a man with a "How's your soul to-day, brother?" and he shrinks from falling into any perfunctory and businesslike dealing with men in their sacredest and most intimate concerns. In short, he feels that he simply cannot bring himself to the part that is so frequently urged upon him and which is evidently expected of him.

But meanwhile he is listened to by great congregations with growing interest and profit. The people are fed by his message. If there are those who would contend that, if he cannot do the work of an evangelist, he has no right to be in the Church, there would be a great number who would rise up to witness to the good he had accomplished for them in their lives and to stand for his right to hold a Chris-

tian pulpit. And the man himself, while admitting his defects on certain lines, might well contend that every man has not the same talent and that the Lord has need of every kind of a worker in his vineyard. He might point to the twelve of the disciple group, and show how varied they were in their mental make-up, and that doubtless Peter would prove a more successful evangelist than the philosophical John, the practical James, or the rationalizing Thomas. He might say that the Scriptures themselves speak of men of many functions—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Without turning away altogether from the evangelistic role, he may frankly say that, like a Brooks, a Storrs, or a Gladden, he must follow the indication of his own natural bent, and, as a teacher of the divine mysteries, serve his Lord in his own way. Certainly there is need enough always for such seers, looking into the heart of the revelation of God, and the world and the Church cannot afford to repudiate their ministry. They may show the profound meaning for everyday living of some familiar or overlooked text; they may speak the word on some agitating social or national question which shall set humanity in right ways; they may illuminate the most perplexing and fundamental problems of moral conduct for individuals and communities; and, in their case as in so many others, wisdom is justified of her children, and they need no apology or defense.

Nevertheless, ought they not to strive to be in some way evangelists after their own kind? We believe they should, and we are confident that they could learn to do more of this work than they now think. Just as the exhorter would improve his dis-

course frequently by injecting more thought into it, so they can strive to make their sermons a little more practical, and not to conclude even the most philosophical discourse without bringing it to a head in some pointed and fervent appeal to line up with its truth. And they need not feel that all evangelistic work needs to be done in any one stereotyped way. Both in public discourse and in private conversation they ought to feel at perfect liberty to be physicians of souls after their own manner, and not after any general prescription. They might wisely seek from time to time the assistance and advice, as experts in that particular field, of some brother pastor or some evangelist who has had great success, along right and uncriticizable modes, in winning men. They can pursue, both with children, young people, and adults, the "cultural" method of leading into a religious experience. And then let them not be at all disturbed by the insinuations or open declarations of any that they have no business in the ministry. They will be able to say, "Henceforth let no man trouble me" and "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made able to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand."

But while so vindicating himself let him never lose the thought from his mind that he is an ambassador for Christ, an advocate pleading before men that they accept salvation on the gospel terms. We listened once, in a celebrated theological school, to a lecturer on the art of preaching. He wound up his discourse by telling a story of an old clergyman who asked a younger brother whether he loved to preach. The answer was an enthusiastic affirmative.

"But," continued the older man, "do you love the men to whom you preach?" The question impressed us as a peculiarly pertinent and searching one. It is an admirable quality in a young minister to be absorbed in his profession; to have a passion for theological problems and general religious thought; to have an irresistible inclination to make each sermon the best possible presentment of its truth, and, in preparation, by reading and reflection, as well as in delivery, to satisfy duty, conscience, and a legitimate pride. His life and happiness are in this effort. But one may be imaginably so taken up with these things—with the scholar's and speaker's ambition, with love of his professional work in itself—as to think principally or only of it and of the sermon as an artistic product. This may happen while he is hardly sensible of it. He loves his task—his thinking, research, writing, and the joyous fervor of utterance. But does he love the men to whom he is speaking? Does he think of them and of their good, or is he thinking of his sermon and his delivery? Perhaps the two often go together and successfully blend. We do not accuse the preacher of undue self-consciousness, and doubtless the sermon will do good even when little thought has been concentrated directly on the hearers. But who can doubt that if, in addition to a passionate attachment to the truth and to his calling and art, the minister joins an intense love for the people to whom he preaches and a fervent desire to help them by every sermon spoken, his influence would be multiplied many times? He must be something more than a professional man, however fine and exalted; he must be a shepherd of souls.

It behooves every preacher to question himself

closely as to his motives for entering the ministry. In these days of large churches and comfortable support there may occasionally arise the query whether our students in the theological seminaries and our young ministers (and frequently those who are not so young) do not think and talk too much about the prospects of fine churches and big salaries, and the chance of being considered "renowned pulpit orators" and of becoming the petted ministers of rich and cultured parishes. There may be nothing in all this. But, sometimes, we have heard rumors that information along these lines was more carefully collected by candidates for the ministry than seemed compatible with an entire consecration to the service of Christ. We think there are few who have not been influenced at times by such considerations. It would be well if every pastor should reflect upon that question of his earliest ordination: "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ, *to serve God for the promoting of his glory and the edifying of his people?*"

John Wesley, in his "Address to the Clergy," has some pointed sentences on this subject. He says: "Would it be possible for a parent to go through the pain and fatigue of bearing and bringing up even one child were it not for that vehement affection which the Creator has given for that very end?" Similarly the minister must have "a large measure of that inexpressible affection" for souls. "He, therefore, must be utterly void of understanding, must be a madman of the highest order, who, on any consideration whatever, undertakes this office while he is a stranger to this affection." The pastor is to

put to himself such searching questions as these: "What was my intention in taking upon me this office and ministry? Was it always, and is it now, wholly and solely to glorify God and save souls? Had I at first, have I now, no secular view, no eye to honor or preferment? to a plentiful income; or, at least, a competency? a warm and comfortable livelihood? . . . Do I love God with all my soul and strength, and my neighbor, every man, as myself? Does this love swallow me up, possess me whole, constitute my supreme happiness? Do I feel such a concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of men, that I am ready to do anything, however contrary to my natural inclination, to part with anything, however agreeable to me, to suffer anything, however grievous to flesh and blood, so that I may save one soul from hell? Is this my ruling temper at all times and in all places? Does it make all my labor light? If not, what a weariness it is—what a drudgery!"

This is the language of a high devotion and of a noble self-sacrifice which produced a race of spiritual heroes. It came as a rebuke and judgment to a secularized and mammonized clergy in the Established Church. We are persuaded that much of it remains with us yet; but in the midst of so much churchly prosperity there is a constant temptation to be looking for "the better appointments"—a temptation which churches may be constantly strengthening through alluring offers. Let us all pray that the old ideal may not be lowered and that the ministry of the Church of Christ may still have the "single eye" and the devoted heart.

We have been much interested in reading a sermon

preached at the Philadelphia Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church by the Right Reverend Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., from the text: "Sanctify them through thy truth [marginal reading, "Consecrate them in the truth"]: thy word is truth." He comments on the cry from the churches for leadership in the ministry—"the man with the seer's eye, the prophet's voice, the directing energy, the compelling personality, that will expound, convince, inspire, and, marching in the van, bring his fellows forward in the right way undeterred by sinister shapes of evil, unconquered by the appalling hindrances to progress." He reminds us of the persistent criticism, the accusations and chidings of secular and ecclesiastical journals—that "the clergy are inadequate for their work"; "they cannot rise to the greatness of their opportunity."

But perhaps too much is being demanded. The theological schools are asked to furnish the theological specialist and the parish minister for plain and practical people from the same institution. The preacher is supposed to be at home in economics, politics, high finance, national policies, the domain of psychologist, anthropologist, and biologist, and to be quite familiar with questions of capital and labor, factory laws, sanitary regulations, education, and much else. All this is to be added to his acquaintance with the whole range of theologic lore, the realm of missionary endeavor, the study of biblical criticism and comparative religion, and provision for the spiritual wants of average human nature. There is danger of expecting, under public demand, too much from any man, and of mistaking where true leadership in the spiritual life lies. A minister should be

a specialist in religion, and to cover the field of all things knowable is an impossible task. He simply becomes a superficialist.

Dr. Vinton thinks there must be more concentration for the definite work of a clergyman, while making all the sciences and philosophies contribute to a service yielded in behalf of man for Jesus' sake. There is great need for hours of reflection and personal examination. If students and ministers are to be always under pressure, "where shall we get our spiritual leaven, with no time to meditate, commune with nature, see visions, and evolve high ideals in silent reflection?" This age is in too much of a hurry for visible results. Under the insistent call for "able preachers, who will draw well," the temptation comes to the clergy to be "up-to-date" and smart. They may thus become lamentably thin, re-issuing in sermon the latest discussions of newspapers and reviews as their freshest thought; daring in destructive theological criticism with no constructive betterment for what has been thrown down, and, led on by a personal success, to use the Church as a theater where self delights to occupy the center of the stage.

Then there is the demand for "a man of tact," for "a man of executive ability—a good administrator," etc. The temptation here is to "work with heels instead of head, and believe that busyness brings beatitude." But, primarily, the man in holy orders is called to the cure of souls. "He is to pack richly with meaning the empty shell of that conventual term—a man of God." Believing that the minister should be a type of the highest manhood, intellectually equipped by nature and education to meet and

win appreciation from his peers in secular life, a man clear-eyed, broad-minded, practical, virtuous, and sympathetic, Dr. Vinton yet laments that so seldom one hears from the churches a request for the first desirable quality in a preacher: "We want a man of consecrated life, whose walk and conversation witness to holiness."

He represents the tired worshiper, out of his soul's craving, as saying: "I don't want to go to church to hear what has rung in my ears all the week; the reiteration of topics, a better presentation of which I can stay at home and read in magazine and newspaper." This man wants a divine uplift, a quickened sensibility for his soul's health, a new inspiration to live as becomes a son of God with an immortal being. We would emphasize what Dr. Vinton says about the necessity of presenting the primary truths of the nature and being of God, of man's relation to him, of human accountability and eternal responsibility for action, of the meaning and power of Christ crucified—all set forth, not in formal phrase, but burning with conviction, and in forms sympathetic with and adapted to the understanding of to-day. There is a great charm in the picture he draws of the ideal minister for our time, facing every issue without compromise; translating and interpreting the significance of the years and their results by the power of holiness as a revelation of God's will; animated by an inextinguishable enthusiasm, an unshaken faith, an inexhaustible hope; living in an atmosphere of heaven, and carrying it with him among men unconsciously, as the physician the scent of healing medicine; speaking, like Moses with the Lord, face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend.

God grant that the numbers of such truly consecrated ministers, seeing clearly their mission and feeling their call, may be raised up in our own generation!

So far from it being the fact that the power of the pulpit is dying out, it must seem to every discerning mind that never in the history of our country was the voice of the man of true convictions, speaking with the authority springing from full comprehension and information and clearest ethical insight, so commanding as it is to-day. Here, as everywhere, there is the widest difference between the man who is trying to say something and the man who has something to say. Clear thought, earnest feeling, moral discernment, spiritual impulse, manly personality in the pulpit—never was there greater need for them, never was there larger call and field.

It would seem as if the challenge of the hour would be heeded by more young men of first-class abilities desiring to serve their generation. Pastors and college professors and presidents can do much in calling the attention of generous-minded youth to the ministry as an exalted life-calling, full of the noblest possibilities for good. In our Christian homes parents ought more frequently to turn the thoughts of their sons in that direction. In former times it was the dearest wish and prayer of many a father and mother that their son should choose the ministry for his vocation, and when the decision was made the joy and pride were correspondingly great. We fear that parents to-day are not so desirous along this line, but are rather anxious that their boys should get into positions where they can amass wealth rather speedily, and perhaps share it with father and

mother. We need a revival of the old-time feeling in this matter.

In the old days a young man not infrequently had not decided "what he was going to be" until the end of his senior year in college. Lately we were told it often happens that, even in the preparatory schools, bright young men of to-day are choosing their courses of study with a view to their future careers. Then, afterward, when the subject of the ministry is broached to them, they declare that it is impossible to consider it—that they cannot afford to throw away all the preparation they have made for another calling. There must, therefore, be an early beginning if the Church is to have its proper chance in securing the finest minds and bravest, most consecrated hearts for its service. There must be more fearless men standing in the pulpit, men who will dare to proclaim the truth directly and uncompromisingly. A correspondent of a Jewish journal heard Dr. Frank Gunsaulus, at Winona Lake one summer, as he was speaking to two thousand ministers in the Bible course. The gist of his reflections was that the minister of to-day must be fearless in unmasking evil wherever he sees it, and that if he did not make plain the great difference between good and evil, the churches would soon be empty of their thinking men and women.

This Hebrew writer avows his suspicion that the churches are empty just because of this kind of preaching. The people, he fears, do not want to be told of their shortcomings; but he thinks it better that the churches be empty than that the minister should fail to do his duty. The minister may be called a busybody, a common, everyday meddler,

but it is not always the sermon that pleases the most that is the best. The prophets of old, declares this Israelite, did not hesitate to pry into the public and private life of the people with whom they had to deal. They spoke plainly of flagrant transgressions, calling a spade a spade. The pulpit must lay bare sin and wrong in low and high places and guide the ethical life of the people in clear and forceful terms.

Not only must there be this note of vigorous, manly preaching, but there must be, in nurse fashion, a definite inculcation of gospel teaching, a clear indoctrination of the hearers. We were lately impressed with a leading editorial in the Methodist Times of London on "A New Departure in Evangelistic Work." The conviction has come to some of the foremost workers in our English Wesleyanism that one of the chief reasons of retardation in revival work is the subtle spirit of doubt and unbelief that has inoculated the minds of many of the most thoughtful of the rising generation, and which affects, too, many in middle life. Consequently, some of the prominent preachers have begun at the foundations, and are delivering sermons on the existence of God, the divinity and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the revelation in the Scriptures, the immortality of the soul, etc. It may be carelessly affirmed that no one will be converted through sermons of such profound theological nature, which would seem to appeal chiefly to the intellect. And yet it must be admitted that, for certain classes, and these the very ones carrying large influence, and whom, therefore, it is very desirable, both for their sake and ours, to have on the side of Christianity, the ordinary evangelistic appeals will carry very little weight if

the groundwork of them is essentially nullified by persistent and fundamental doubts in the hearers.

Nothing is gained but everything is lost by an unreasonable denunciation of this sometimes unwilling skepticism in which many reflecting minds, in this age of science and criticism which have unsparingly opened every supposedly settled belief, find themselves enmeshed. As the *Times*, with rare discretion, says: "The first impulse of a chivalrous onlooker is to sympathize and delicately help to the recovery of self-possession and serenity. Such help may be given to bewildered minds, and will be given more successfully if we admit the existence of difficulties. Why should we not recognize that the difficulty and vastness of the problems of faith bear witness to the greatness of the soul, and to the future which lies before us in the purpose of God? Why should we not ask our young inquirers to see in their own helpless bewilderment an evidence of the grandeur of the truth, concerning which they are in doubt? Ideas which can be understood and proved in half an hour are peddling and commonplace, while eternity may be opened to the soul dazzled 'by excess of light.' For our own comfort let us bear in mind this feature of the state of mind in many of our young folks."

It may be that the situation in America is not parallel with that in Great Britain, and that none of our evangelistic difficulties lie in this direction. Nevertheless, it is worth thinking about, if not for every church, at least for some peculiarly situated. And, on general principles, we are in favor of sermons with "strong meat" in them; and we think, if put with clearness, simplicity, and earnestness,

they are far more acceptable to the people than the "neat little essay" kind of discourses, or the exclusive presentation of good but quite subordinate Scriptural teachings. And such rock-bottom discussions of the Christian creed need not be merely intellectual and void of elements that shall stir the heart and conscience to the depths. A sermon which should state luminously, logically, persuasively, the great compelling reasons for belief in a Divine Being whom we may rightly call Father, might, with appropriateness and tremendous force, conclude with a demonstration of man's duty to love, serve, and obey such a God, and a tender entreaty to turn toward him in repentance and faith. A sermon on the divinity of Christ could be made overpowering in its practical application on the obligation of all to surrender to such a Saviour and follow him forever. A sermon on the inevitable penalties of sin, the sure rewards of righteousness, the reasonableness of the hope of immortality would put every listener face to face with the most solemn and awful alternatives.

All preachers cannot do this work equally well. For, if the first part of the sermon is to deal with real, solid argument, and not in declamations or flimsy reasonings easily brushed aside, it will take the most patient and prolonged study. The elaboration of a cogent demonstration in the face of modern objections is a slow and difficult process. Many know that there are sufficient reasons for faith though they are not enough trained and skilled to state them in orderly fashion themselves. The writer we are quoting utters his warning on this point in these words: "Devout men must feel some solicitude and fear when they notice the lightness

with which men attempt to discuss and solve the deepest problems of life. For often, perhaps, problems to which no human mind is fully equal are approached without men being aware of all that is involved; the labor, patience, and cautious correction necessary, the consequences of mistake both to oneself and others. Men make their assertions on great and mysterious subjects with all the gayety and brilliant exaggeration which befit a controversy on some matter of taste. Besides, it is evident enough that love of discussion is not the same as love of truth. Few men appear more hopeless than those of shallow thought and contentious temper. Self-satisfied reasoners, whether they are for us or against us, are as 'a smoke in the nostrils'; they are a hindrance and difficult to influence for good. If the number of them should be increased, it will be most unfortunate. If we should catch their spirit, it will be sad."

Let all preachers, therefore, beware of the sin of shallowness, and let those who are uncertain of their own ability go to the leading master minds of modern religious controversy and study long and earnestly the defense of the faith as shown by them; and, when these powerful arguments have been so digested and assimilated as to become part of their deepest soul-convictions, let them give them to their people. The ages of controversy—of the early Church, of Luther, of Wesley—have been also the ages of revival. It will not be every church or preacher, we repeat, that can or ought to follow these suggestions. But for some it seems to us to be pre-eminently the demand of the hour.

And particularly in solving the question of how to

bring men to church and under the power of the gospel, there must be the presentation of something really thoughtful and profound. Men, in their way, are hero-worshippers as much as women are. Nobody has much use for sentimentalism or effeminacy. The preacher who would draw men must walk hand in hand with God on one side and with man on the other. Christ mingled among men and did not set himself upon an unapproachable plane. Men who have kept in touch with the world's pulse care but little for the abstruse and the theological. The finest argument is wasted on the layman if it fails to touch some vital subject. Most men have little use for "hot air"; they insist upon one's coming to the point. Their preacher cannot be an afternoon-tea man, or a matinee hero, or a monk. He must be their companion and their leader. He must show them that religion is as practical as it is theoretical. He must present the Christ, not simply in his aspect of meekness and gentleness, but as the courageous defender of the truth. His sermons should be short and crisp and sensible.

But the matter of brevity in sermons is in distinct danger of being overemphasized. In a prominent secular paper we find the following synopsis of the late Bishop Potter's ideas as to the "twenty-minute" sermons: "The telephone, the telegraph, and the cable have taught us in a most practical way the preciousness of time. It is a day of short things—short sermons, short editorials, short speeches. Quick transit has got into the blood of the age, into its thought, into its method of business, into the course of life." But the editor well says that "we must have a care that we do not apply the principle

too far and too indiscriminately." So we think. If twenty-minute sermons are so much better than those of forty minutes, why not improve still further and make them quite perfect by not having them exceed ten minutes in length, or even five? Ought there not to be some place where we are not in a rush and can take a little time? Ought we to carry into the house of God the nervous intensity and compression of our crowded business hours? As it is, do we consume any too much time in thinking about the things of the soul? We can imagine a good many worse things than the half-hour or even the forty-five-minute sermon—that is, if the minister is all the time saying helpful and inspiring things.

It must be conceded that, generally, people who go to church would be willing to excuse their ministers from expositions of the purely controversial questions in theology on Sunday. They do not particularly enjoy hearing the minister castigate heretics and "rationalists"—especially when the "rationalists" may be men of straw. As far as they themselves are concerned, they are neither skeptics nor infidels nor heterodox, and do not need to be convinced week after week of the fundamental doctrines of their faith, though, as we have said, it is well for them to receive occasional reassurance. They actually believe in God and Christ and the Bible, and have never thought of questioning or denying them all their lives. We have spoken above of the need in some churches and communities of definite theological instruction. But most Christians are more interested in spiritual and practical themes which have a more direct bearing upon the spirituality and morality of their everyday lives. One of

our contemporaries states the case well in these words: "Any theological truth which reacts toward strength for living or purity of conduct will be listened to. Any sort of talk, theological or otherwise, which the preacher lugs in for a show of his intellectual acumen or for proof of his dogmatic orthodoxy, will be flouted with disrespect. The difference is the difference between preaching on 'The Love of God for Lost Humanity' and preaching on 'The Ontological Argument for God's Existence.' "

Evangelists are not infrequently unmindful of this essential distinction. Too many of them have adopted or invented some newfangled theological "plan" or "scheme" of salvation, full of crotchets and individual idiosyncrasies. Night after night they elaborate the "system," and then, at the end of each exposition, exclaim with earnestness, "Believe it! Believe it!" with the assurance that believing it means salvation. John Wesley—who saw so clearly that no amount of intellectual assent to dogmas could perform a saving work in the soul, and who found peace and joy only in a personal trust in Christ—would, we imagine, tell such preachers that such a presentation was a delusion and a snare. Even though the theological system propounded was never so reasonable and orthodox, there would be no salvation in accepting any theory of the atonement or of the Deity of Christ; and what shall we say when doctrines are set forth which are so repugnant to intelligent hearers that they are almost compelled to admit that it would be quite impossible to force themselves to accept them even upon the hazard of not getting to heaven? A recent writer has defined saving faith as "a peculiar taste,

a trust, an aspiration, a love." It is not the conclusion of a metaphysical argument; it is not a demonstration in theology after the order of proving a theorem in Euclid.

And what shall be said about the introduction into the pulpit of discussions *pro* or *con* as to the results of the investigations of the "higher criticism"? It would seem highly injudicious for any preacher to attempt it, except so far as any light might be incidentally thrown on the spiritual interpretation of the Bible. In the first place, the themes of the pulpit should not be scholastic. The business of the preacher is to proclaim the Evangel—to announce the Good News, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives of Satan, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound in sin; to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor and the day of the vengeance of our God on all iniquity. It is a very definite and practical program along lines of repentance, conversion, consolation, and encouragement to righteousness. The role of the book-teacher—of the pedagogue—is not for the preacher. It is his mission to bring Christ to men.

It is as Dr. Borden P. Bowne has well said: "Christian thought does not center around the authorship of the Pentateuch or about any questions concerning the unity of Isaiah or the historical character of Daniel." "It centers," he says, "in the thought of God the Father Almighty, of Jesus Christ his Son and our Lord, of the sanctifying, inspiring, life-giving Spirit, and of the kingdom of God. This is the gist and root of the whole matter; and from this our thought should go out, and to it our thought should ever return. The supreme thing

is not to affirm or deny higher criticism, not to affirm or deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, not to affirm or deny the historicity of Daniel, but to preach the gospel and bring in the kingdom of God."

And, as Dr. W. N. Clarke has so wisely reminded us, it is folly that certain literary questions about the Bible should obtain a disproportionate degree of prominence, and that points of no intrinsic importance for the moral and spiritual life should be elevated to the highest rank and insisted upon as vital and decisive. Rather, the living questions with which clergyman and layman alike must deal are such as these: "Whether Christianity is able to elevate the ideals of common life, to check the overweening power of money, to limit self-indulgence, to bring in a higher standard of honesty, to protect the family from disintegrating influences, to diminish drunkenness and the social evil, to rescue the lost part of the community, to commend religion to all souls, to condemn and banish war, to create confidence in righteousness as a living power, to establish brotherly kindness as the law of life."

Again, the method of the classroom is fundamentally different from the procedure in public worship. In the lecture room there can be interruptions—questions and answers—which are not allowable during preaching. Doubtful impressions cannot be cleared up in church by interrogations. Still further, the theological lecturer addresses students who have been carefully prepared by previous study for such special investigation as he conducts them through. In the Church there is a mixed assemblage of all ages and of all degrees of culture. No preacher could possibly adapt his pedagogical instruction on such

difficult and delicate critical subjects as the higher criticism raises without being thoroughly misunderstood by some and very imperfectly understood by more. It is very questionable whether the good he might do to the few would counterbalance the hurt he might work on others in whose minds he might simply stir up confusion. And, after all, the question will insist on recurring—*Cui bono?*—what necessary good would be done for weary, hard-working men and women who want inspiring and comforting? What would they get out of it all which would be helpful to them in their daily living, in their trials, temptations, and sorrows?

But it is said that many of our thoughtful laymen are intensely interested in these themes. If so, there is quite an accessible library designed for the use of the laity, books like Washington Gladden's "Who Wrote the Bible?" or Lyman Abbott's "How to Study the Bible," which will be found very helpful for private reading. And wherever there is a real interest among a number of laymen in the Church, classes or clubs for the more comprehensive study of the Scriptures could be formed, and in them the preacher could easily become an intelligent leader. The spiritual revelations of the Scriptures—their essential message, their consolation, inspiration, manifestation of God, presentation of the Christ, unfoldings of duty and privilege to the soul—are not involved in, touched by, nor impaired by the work of the critics, which lies in a field external to the inner truth.

We have no intention of recommending a policy of suppression, of foolishly trying to keep our laymen in ignorance of modern conclusions. We have

no fear of these conclusions of the critics for ourselves, if they are sufficiently authenticated by demonstration. Neither do we fear the effect of any such truths on the religion of anyone who has any real religion, a religion of vital experience, based on truth experimentally and spiritually apprehended, and not on the formal acceptance of any species of literalism. So far from seeking to keep our laymen away from knowing what their pastors are reading about, wherever there is any real interest, as there should be with many, in these most important matters, we would recommend cordially to their study some of the numerous popular treatises on the Bible intended for their illumination, and would favor classes for their instruction, led either by the pastor or some other capable and judicious person.

But we contend that there are conclusive reasons for holding that the pulpit itself, on the Sabbath day, is not the place for such expositions. In this view we find ourselves upheld by the late Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren), of Liverpool. He writes:

“The critical movement has not only affected students in their studies, but also preachers in their pulpits, and while I have ever pleaded for full liberty in criticism, and have used that liberty myself, I am free to acknowledge that I would have done more good if I had been less critical and more evangelical. And by evangelical I mean more heartening and more comforting.

“There are widows anxious about their families, young men fighting a life or death battle with fiery temptations, lonely women with empty hearts, merchants harassed by business affairs, old folk near-

ing the banks of the Jordan, feeble folk with the message of death in their bodies. Perhaps they ought to be blamed for their indifference, but they really do not care one straw who wrote the Penta-teuch, or what is the meaning of the Athanasian Creed; but they are hungering and thirsting for a word of good cheer to strengthen their arms and to lift up their heads. It is cruel if they do not get it.

“Allow me to whisper in some young minister’s ear that if he is going to select two or three professional men and prepare learned sermons for them, he is making a double mistake. He is neglecting the common people who heard his Master gladly and he is wearying the other people nigh unto death; they have had enough of the lecture room and its theories. They have come to church for light on daily duty and inspiration to do it bravely. And when I have in my day, like us all, attempted to reconcile science and religion, one of the greatest men in science who used also to be a hearer in my church never seemed to be interested; but when I dealt with the deep affairs of the soul he would come round in the afternoon to talk it out.”

CHAPTER XI

THE LAYMEN AND THE REVIVAL

THERE is no phrase more overworked in the church vernacular than this—"We want a preacher who can draw." It may be pertinently asked by any preacher with reference to any charge, "Is it a people that will draw?" For the obligation is as much upon one as the other. Where everything has been concentrated in the minister, when he dies or departs the work falls to pieces. Where there has been efficient organization, so that everyone in the church has been set to work to win men to Christ, the church activities go right on even when for a time there is no leader.

The function of the church people is not to be "lookers on in Venice"; not to stand outside and coolly remark upon and criticize the way the pastor does things. It is their business to labor together with him for the conversion and building up of men in the gospel. And yet there are many churches where there have been few if any conversions for years, and it becomes a serious question what will become of the organization when the old people all die off. The blame for this condition cannot all be laid on the ministry. Given a blood-earnest membership, intent on leading men to Christ, and there will be revivals despite indifferent pastorates. And any conscientious pastor can succeed with the hearty coöperation of his people who "draw" along with him.

When will the people of God arrive at the con-

clusion that it is not enough for them to come to service twice a Sunday, and absorb the gospel, sponge-like, and never give out any of it? When will they take the hint from those inconspicuous disciples who, after the early persecutions, scattered all over the Roman empire, but wherever they went kindled the fires of Christianity by their unquenchable testimonies, each one of them feeling himself divinely commissioned to be a propagandist of the faith; and, in fact, doing it anyhow, naturally and spontaneously, simply because he could not keep still about it? It was impossible for him to hold his tongue concerning such a matter. And he not only talked about it, but, for its sake, cheerfully met the lions, the gladiators, the burning stakes. It is little wonder that Christ was so soon made known all over the civilized world and that converts were made to his name by the thousands. The flaming zeal spread like a prairie fire, licking up all in its way.

Instead of saying that nothing either great or small remains for them to do besides sitting still and making caustic remarks on the failures of the poor harassed minister, who is only a mortal like themselves, it is for his people, glowing with the love of Christ and longing to make it known, to fall to and assist in the work of inviting men and bringing them under the influence of the gospel. We have heard many people pray fervently for the raising up of those who should "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty," when all the while it was themselves who obviously needed raising up. They would sing emotionally, "But drops of grief can ne'er repay the debt of love I owe," and then seem-

ingly think that the confession of bankruptcy was enough of a settlement.

We debate endlessly on the problem of "how to save the masses." Every other plan is suggested but the obvious one of going to them as individuals, one by one, and trying to lovingly persuade them to accept Christ. No reliance upon new methods, no novel inventions on the part of any evangelists will take the place of this. Simple-hearted and ignorant followers of Wesley, with little else to help them but hearts surcharged with the love of Jesus, went out to save England and did it. The prayer of every church member should be that he might be assisted to proclaim through all the earth abroad the honors of his Master's name.

Not only by reading the Scriptures, prayer, partaking of the communion, public worship, will men learn to love Christ. In a blessed reflex influence all service vivifies love, as all love inspires service. The ardor of young converts would not so soon cool if they would keep actively at work trying to save their friends and companions, and backsliders would not so quickly have forgotten how they had been taken from the pit, how the shepherd had sought and found his sheep, how the Father had welcomed back the prodigal, if they themselves had remembered, like David, to teach transgressors their ways, so that sinners should be converted to God.

How shall Christians acquit themselves of inordinate selfishness and ingratitude if they try to hoard the love of Christ or fail to publish it? In the old dispensation authority was the ruling note; in the new, gratitude. "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee

and hath had compassion on thee." They who sympathize in reality, and not merely sentimentally, with the mission of Christ, which involved his passion and cross, will so love him that they will want to coöperate with him in seeking to see that for which his soul travails, and so be satisfied. They can test the depth and sincerity of their religious life by the measure of their desire for the conversion of others. The heart-throbs must not die out. The love must be kept continually fresh. The gospel must be evermore "good news," not old and stale and inert, not a mere remembrance of a burned-out emotion. There must be constantly a willing, devoted, concerted, coöperative evangelism.

In all churches where special meetings are conducted many are the earnest prayers ascending for the manifestation of God's power and grace in saving men. No one can overestimate the importance or the benefit of such petitions. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." But if prayer is to prove its sincerity, its downright honesty, its faith must be joined to works. What shall we say of those who nightly pray with such fervor for a revival and then never, by a single spoken word, endeavor to influence anyone in favor of the Christian life? It must be honestly confessed that there is a strong flavor of religious professionalism and perfunctoriness in such an attitude.

In our experience we have found it the hardest kind of work to get many people to pledge definitely to even invite people to come to the special or regular services of the Church, or to call for and accompany them to the place of prayer. If, in the enthusiasm of a fervent meeting, the promise were made,

it seemed to slip the memory very shortly afterward. And it was the rarest thing to see any stranger, unless some visitor of the family, in the member's regular pew on Sunday. Once we were seriously informed that nearly everyone in that city went to church somewhere and that there were no unattached people to invite!

It is not necessary that church members should be skilled in religious argument, in the ability of a lawyer to state and defend his case, in order to be efficient in serving Christ and their fellow men in these highest ways. A single sentence, spoken with feeling and manifest concern and love, is worth volumes of theological discussion. Men do not care for controversy as much as they do for the manifestation of a warm, unaffected heart-love, and when they see that they respond.

Much has been written about the New Evangelism. One must not be prepared by the term for anything startlingly novel. In some churches, however, the well-known method of having the laity go out as evangelists—men and women of the churches seeking their friends and acquaintances individually, and endeavoring to persuade them to accept the Christian life—is just now bearing much fruit. Perhaps this old-time method has fallen so long into disuse that, in its present revised form, it may well be called “new.” There is growing a pronounced and gracious movement from working this plan among the Presbyterian churches which we would do well to study seriously.

This form of activity makes no great or sensational stir, so as to attract much public notice. It finds its sphere, not in big opera houses, music halls,

armories, or rinks, but in the local churches. The pastors of these churches, perhaps assisted by neighboring pastors, are the evangelists. Many professional evangelists have conspicuous excellencies, but familiar objections are urged against some representatives, the chief being that their work is not permanent, and that, in a few months after an extensive revival, few or none of the converts remain. The doctrine is sometimes erratic, the preaching and methods frequently stagey; pastors find it next to impossible to transfer such attachment as existed in the convert for the evangelist to themselves and the Church; and too frequently the impression made upon the so-called convert's mind seems very slight, casual, and easily obliterated. So that, if there can be a revival in the church itself, under the preaching of the appointed minister, there is much gain. And if the preaching can be vital, and not formal nor antiquated nor mechanical; keeping loyally to the best aspects of truth seen in the light of the latest thinking of men of God; translating doctrine into terms of conduct and character; linking ethics with religious feeling; appealing to reason, conscience, and the higher emotional and spiritual instincts rather than to low fears and vulgar superstitions; presenting Christ as he is interpreted by the most reverent and rational minds of to-day—if the preaching can be thus practical, spiritual, virile, true to life as well as the gospel, intense, throbbing with love, much may be expected as result.

We want to commend a tiny volume by William DeWitt Hyde, president of Bowdoin College, and entitled "The New Ethics." In the chapter on "Social Sympathy and Responsibility" we met a para-

graph that riveted our attention and suggested wide deductions. President Hyde says: "Every person of any considerable strength of character can recall many an instance in which by half an hour's conversation, followed up by occasional suggestions afterward, he has changed the whole subsequent career of another person. To one who has discovered the secret of this power, a week permitted to pass by, without thus changing the life-currents of half a dozen of his fellows, would seem a wicked, wanton waste of life's chief privilege and joy. I could name a quiet, modest man who, at a low estimate, has changed directly and radically for the better a thousand human lives, and indirectly, to an appreciable degree, certainly not less than a hundred thousand. He is no professional preacher or evangelist, and the greater part of this vast work has been done in quiet conversation, mainly in his own home and by correspondence."

Anyone can make his own application of this remarkable instance. It has, of course, its bearings immediate and direct on the subject now uppermost in the thought of the Church—persuading men by personal interest and conversation of their need of religion, of the claims of Christ upon them, and of the necessity that their lives should have in them the Spirit of Christ; in other words, the pressing program of personal and unofficial evangelism is here plainly indicated. It is the hope of being an inspiration to others in this loftiest personal service that must furnish incentive to every minister in his preaching and pastoral work, and the joy of which service can be shared by any layman, any humblest follower of Christ, who will seriously undertake it.

Frequently the very pertinent question is raised whether the churches are really ready for a revival or not. It is a searching question to put in regard to any parish where frigid formality is characteristic of services and where caste distinctions have crept in among the membership. Would such church members recognize a revival when they saw it? Would they know what to do with it should it by any accident break out among them? Would they be able in any right way to direct seekers after Christ and his religion into the right paths of repentance and consecration? Or, should any converts, by any supposition, show themselves, could they survive long where the atmosphere was not one of warmth or of cheer? Could such a church organize and direct the activity of these converts, and put them to work in such spiritual, moral, and philanthropic activities as would draw out their best religious energies?

The nominal Christian, the man who has really backslidden, but who has hardly confessed it to himself, is a man to be condoled with when he finds a revival making its appearance. He is of all men most uncomfortable and hardly knows how to comport himself. If there be such in any church to-day, immediate necessity lies upon them of doing the first works over again, and bringing themselves into sympathetic relation with Christ and evangelistic effort, so that they may coöperate warm-heartedly in the efforts to save others.

There must be a great returning to the searching of the Word of God, in order that He may speak to each soul out of his own revelation. If, in private life and in the family circle, the Bible has been neglected, there must be a conscientious return to its

reading. Men must read it prayerfully and reverently to find for themselves words for their own souls and directions for evangelizing their brethren. It is doubtless true that there has been an awakening of interest in the Bible lately manifested, greater than any similar movement shown since the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The conventions of the Religious Education Association show a wonderful and gratifying trend in this direction. The earnest and continued study of the Bible is one of the absolutely necessary preliminaries to any coming revival. And when it comes, if any formal Christianity, wherever it exists, shall be broken down by the incoming of the flaming breath of God, we shall see church officers conversing with their business acquaintances, and parents talking lovingly to their children about the Saviour. Friend will speak with friend, and more will be accomplished in such fashion than any of us can now anticipate—more than by any methods, however ingenious, any church leaders may devise.

For too many people specifically religious duty would seem to be summed up in going to church on Sunday, attending the weekly prayer meeting and paying "quarterage." They keep the minister in the pulpit, listen to him, praise or criticize him, as the case may be. Whatever is to be done in the community in a religious way, he is to do it. That is what he is paid for, and that, accordingly, is what is expected of him. It does not seem to occur to the average lay member that Christ imposes any definite evangelistic obligation upon him. Not until Christians get away from such an idea will there be any general revival. Not until each individual is willing

to go out and interest himself in his friend and neighbor, inviting him to the Saviour; not until church members feel personally both the necessity and the privilege of winning souls will there be any great movement. "The Church," as an abstract personality, cannot draw men to the cross. There must be tireless, tactful, earnest effort on the part of individuals. Room or time must be made for this endeavor, amusements must be abridged, appointments must be declined, and the right of way must be given to the supreme need of the hour—the invitation to be saved. To expect the minister to do all of this is palpably unreasonable. As Wesley said, church members themselves must be "all at it, and always at it."

The resolution, which we once saw, requesting the return for another year of work of a prominent pastor, contains a significant expression. After asking the return, the paper continues:

"Realizing that the need of our church and this community is a great revival of religion, and recognizing the fact that the pastor alone cannot bring about this desired result, we pledge ourselves, with God's help, to give our earnest, prayerful endeavor in coöperating with our pastor in this sacred work. And we humbly pray that a sincere desire for a revival and gracious outpouring of God's blessing upon our church may possess the heart and soul of every member of our congregation."

Such an expression as the above needs no comment. It is enough to cause a pastor to enter upon the new year with the swing of victory. It is a recognition of the fact that an invitation to return means comradeship in the continued battle. We commend

both spirit and form, and may such requests increase and mightily multiply.

What a picture of a certain type of church members is that etched for us so sharply by that shrewd observer, Whittier, in his prelude to "Among the Hills"! Many will recall the realistic description:

Churchgoers, fearful of the unseen Powers,
But grumbling over pulpit tax and pew rent,
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls
And winter pork with the least possible outlay
Of salt and sanctity: in dally life
Showing as little actual comprehension
Of Christian charity and love and duty,
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been
Out-dated like a last year's almanac.

The pastor may be consumed with an honest zeal, he may sincerely long for the awakening of men to their religious needs and duties, but if he is surrounded by an indifferent, apathetic membership, a revival is next to impossible. Into such a frigid atmosphere there is little probability that any souls will be born anew. The chances are, unless he has a personality extraordinarily strong, that the pastor himself will be benumbed by the zero temperature, and made one with his half-frozen flock. There ought to be little necessity for spending several weeks in getting the church "in condition." The great majority of the professing Christians ought not to be such spiritual invalids that they have to be put into hospital for a month each year, before, as good soldiers, they are ready for the campaign. They ought to be as eager, as desirous, as full of yearning for getting men converted as the pastor himself. Such a church will stimulate even a half-hearted minister and conquer success.

But how general is this feeling among the people? Candor compels us to admit that it is conspicuous by its absence. There is a meaning in the phrase "passion for souls," but it is more talked about than in evidence. The demand of the hour is for a consecrated laity, every one filled with evangelistic ardor, every one seeking to influence others Christward. If the officers and influential members in every church were as actively interested in seeking to bring their neighbors under the power of the gospel as they rightly are in engineering the finances and providing for the church's material equipment, we should find our communities vastly more affected. But all the members, not the officary only, should be awake and at work. What could not be accomplished if the latent but unexpressed and unemployed evangelizing power of the laity might be realized to the Church? Is it an impossibility? Is this easy-going, phlegmatic, dormant condition—sluggish as that of the hibernating bear—something natural and unavoidable? Are we breathing constantly, in the atmosphere of our times, some noxious gas that is overcoming us with stupor and etherizing us into a perilous bliss of unconsciousness as to the unspiritualized condition of the world?

The Congregationalist at one time published a remarkable symposium upon the subject of "Laymen and a Revival." It asked laymen themselves to reply to the questions whether the average layman in late years has shifted on the minister the main responsibility for the spiritual life of the Church and the community, and in what definite ways can laymen to-day coöperate with ministers to extend a genuine religious spirit in a community. The edi-

tor printed some fifteen extended replies from as many laymen, prominent in the Congregational Church, and representing different sections of the country. We were greatly interested in what they said, for it is our conviction that in the direction of this inquiry will be found the main cause for the lack of spirituality in our churches.

There was a general agreement that too much responsibility was unloaded upon the minister for the conversion of others; and yet several thought that the practice was not of recent growth, but, rather, that there had been a considerable improvement on general lines over conditions one hundred years ago. The strenuous life of the average business man may account for his seeming neglect in active religious work for others; but, despite the strain of our times, there seems to be abundant leisure for all sorts of clubs and literary and social organizations. If spiritual life is at a low ebb, the blame may be laid at the door of the excessive materialism of our day, the everlasting rush for money. There may have been no conscious shifting upon the minister of the burden for souls, but, nevertheless, practically, the layman's duty in the matter is neglected or ignored. It needs but little reflection to understand that the spiritual life of the community cannot be separated from the spiritual life of the Church. If the Church will develop strongly its religious life, it will assuredly quicken souls in contact with it and draw them to itself and to Christ.

Much of the responsibility may lie with the minister himself. Many causes may have coöperated to deaden his zeal for evangelization—one of the chiefest being, perhaps, the apathy of his people which

becomes contagious. A people constantly demanding and expecting diversion in the pulpit, and not an awakening theme speaking to heart and conscience, will soon influence the average minister to adopt unconsciously its own ideals. The minister must brace himself by prayer and consecration against this tendency. He must be the leader and not the led. He must go up into the mount and thence bring his inspiring message—touch the emotions of men, make them feel, give them food for their spiritual natures, lift their souls to higher planes, arouse them to a vital interest in the spiritual welfare of the surrounding community.

If the minister tries to do all the work himself, with the assistance, perhaps, of an associate or a deaconess, he is distinctly to blame. As some of these Congregational laymen look at it, he is to utilize the membership of his church just as the superintendent of a great factory utilizes his force of workmen. He is to set them all at work, instead of, as now, having ninety per cent idle and ineffective. The churches are burdened with dead masses, and business methods of getting everybody actively employed must be used. There must be a reconsecration of the laymen as well as of the ministry. The extension of a genuine religious spirit in the community can come only through lives made holy by the Spirit of God. Laymen must, in their private and business lives, maintain a high grade of personal integrity and conscientiousness—an everyday religion without reproach. They must love the Church, have a more vivid consciousness of its dignity, its absolute necessity in the world, and of its great opportunity. More than any program of methods—

of things to do and the way to do them—they need a consuming love for Christ and a burning passion for the spiritual welfare of their fellow men. Given these, and methods of work will not be hard to discover. Where there is indeed a will there is ever a way.

And there are very many ways that these clear-sighted laymen see for themselves to set to work in Christ's cause, ways which lie close at hand in the existing activities of the Church, and which are already enlisting much lay effort: the cultivation of a definite spiritual life in the home, through secret and family prayer and Bible study; the Christ-life copied in behavior toward the wife and the children, and lived on the street, in the office, in the club and drawing room; regular attendance at Sunday and mid-week services, with preparation by prayer; study of the prayer meeting topics and taking some part during the hour; inviting others to any and all of the church services, greeting strangers cordially, and speaking an appreciative word to the pastor; Bible class work in church and Young Men's Christian Association; common-sense teaching in the Sunday school; helping in twenty-minute meetings, at noon or midnight, for shopmen. All of this general activity, combined with an ardor for missions at home and abroad, will help greatly to intensify the spiritual atmosphere of any church.

But, more specifically, if countless more laymen will carry on neighborhood meetings for Bible study and prayer; give personal invitations to accept Christ as Saviour and unite with the Church, so that the mechanic shall work with mechanic, merchant with merchant, clerk with clerk, individual with indi-

vidual; keep a sympathetic outlook in the Sunday school and young people's meetings for any ripe for the reaping, the results will be incalculable. We want personal work for persons. Too much of our work is an effort to organize the people and save a crowd. May there come to the laity in all our churches an open-mindedness to the guidance of the Spirit, and the fullest coöperation with the Spirit-filled church organization!

We fear that too often, among the rank and file of our church membership, the work done and the burdens and responsibilities carried by the officary of the Church are distinctly underestimated and not appreciated at their true value. Indeed, these faithful brethren who cheerfully give so much of their time and thought, surrendering so many evenings when they might be enjoying the comforts of their homes, often come in for no little criticism on the part of their fellow members. They get no remuneration for their labors, but they frequently get plenty of fault-finding, particularly from those who, doing nothing else in behalf of the Church, appear to have a considerable amount of time for such contributions.

Think, too, of the multitude of things that must engage their thoughts and concern in the conduct of the Church. Possibly there is a new church edifice to erect. Not only is there the minister to look after regularly, but the choir, the sexton, and sometimes other care-takers. There are the general necessities of the Sunday school. There are the insurance to be met, the interest on the debt, perhaps, the consideration of the sinking fund, the amount necessary for repairs, the administration of the poor fund, the

plans for raising the benevolences, and a score of other matters which come up monthly.

They are the "dependables." But is it much wonder that these brethren, almost of necessity, come to think of the Church from its business side, and to convert religion into terms of dollars and cents? They speak of themselves as "doorkeepers in the house of the Lord," and that too often they are, and little else, unfortunately; for the material side of the church work engrosses them almost entirely, and to the exclusion of its spiritual activities. Finance become almost synonymous with piety. And what happens to them happens quite frequently with many of the women, who spend great portions of their time in planning to raise money by fairs and festivals and entertainments, so that the definitely religious element is somewhat crowded out of their thoughts and experience.

Doubtless these efficient and practical-minded men and women are of a somewhat different mold and temperament from another class in the Church who are prominent for their piety, and who sometimes do scant justice in their thoughts to officials who may not be of the Saint John type, but rather modeled after Saint James. Nevertheless, these latter mean to be true and earnest Christians, serving the Lord and his cause devotedly in their own field, and with their native inclinations and capacities, and they should not be looked upon with doubt as to their real Christian life. In fact, we have not meant to intimate that many of these hard-working men and women do not have a vital piety besides a talent for administration and aggressiveness. Many are as eminent in one department as the other. But large

numbers of our active, brusque, go-ahead business men, who like to see things kept a-moving in the churches, can scarcely be described as mystics. They often speak of themselves smilingly as "no great saints," but as wanting to see the Church meet its bills and be conducted on business principles. All honor to these brethren! We write not to hold them up for reproof, but only to exhort them to enter into larger privileges, which are theirs in Christ Jesus. It is right and supremely creditable that they should give themselves so self-sacrificingly to the material needs of the Church. Without them and their labors things could not go on in Zion, and the Church in all its activities, spiritual as well as philanthropic, would languish. How often do they go down into their pockets to make up little deficiencies that the rest of the membership never know anything about!

If, now, they would add to these admitted virtues a completer zeal for consecration along definitely religious lines and vital experiences in heart piety, what a gain it would be all around! There would be no cleavage in the Church in relation to spirituality, but a delightful oneness in the appropriation of gospel grace. The "saints" would rejoice to see those who they thought had only very moderate allowances of religion one with them in spirit, and would thereafter coöperate with them more cheerfully. And what a satisfaction and a glory would come into the heart of many an industrious, overladen trustee or steward, almost distracted sometimes with the financial problems centering in the house of the Lord, if he would only seek prayerfully an increase in spiritual power and inward, satisfying knowledge

of the Saviour! An untold joy would flood through him, and it would beget a new enthusiasm in his work for Christ, spiritual now as well as financial.

Generally the official members are the picked men of the Church, and as such of the largest influence. When they add a warm-hearted, devotional spirit to all their business endowments, what a help to the inner life of the Church comes from them! The young people look up to them, and their influence, both exerted and unconscious, is beyond easy estimate. They stand before the outside public as the representatives of the Church and of Christianity, and as such are noted and appraised.

They can inspire all the services if powerful and devout personalities. But when they seem cold and unresponsive to a true piety, their influence is often enough to dampen the ardor of a whole congregation of people. A frigid and dead formalism takes the place of a living faith. Instead of the revival there is a paralyzing apathy. Would that everywhere the officary of the Church might realize their tremendous duties and responsibilities, both to themselves individually and to the churches in which they are in the matter of a profounder spirituality! The key to the revival situation is very frequently obviously held in their hands.

We think, therefore, that there will be a general agreement among all pastors that, before we can expect any general revival among the unconverted masses of the country, a large work of preparation must be done with the body of professing Christians themselves. We do not mean that these are all in need of reconversion or even of sanctification. But there is lacking that cordial and sympathetic atmos-

phere which constitutes the right environment and condition for the conversion of sinners in any numbers. We do not mean that church members are "opposed to revivals," nor that they do not in a way desire to see men turning to God. But the feeling is altogether too languid a one; it has in it little yearning or passion. It is only a proper bit of sentiment, and it does not arouse to prayer, effort, action. It is genially apathetic.

And this amiable lethargy as to the conversion of sinners is to be found not only in the pews, but in the pulpit also. Ministers, of course, if you ask them, will admit that they want to see men saved. But they do not seem to want it hard enough. They begin revivals, but with a lurking skepticism underneath as to any results. There are absent the confident mood of expectancy and the energetic determination with God's help to succeed.

It is not pleasant but distinctly painful for us to have to make this diagnosis and proclaim the existence of such a state of affairs. But we might as well face the facts. When we understand the situation we may be in a condition then to reform it. We admit that there is a reflex action that will assert itself, and that when sinners begin to repent and are gloriously saved the sight of such a work of grace will do as much as anything to awaken the interest of Christians which is now so sickly. We do not advocate postponing all appeals to the unconverted until we have actively enlisted every church member in an evangelistic campaign. Nevertheless, we do not believe that there will be any wide, profound manifestation of the Spirit's power until, in the Christian community itself, there shall rise a strong

tide of positive, passionate yearning and prayerfulness for it.

This means something else than praying the accepted prayers for a revival in prayer meeting and at the exhortation of the pastor. All unconsciously these may be merely perfunctory, a pious drill. The real test of the existence of a yearning for the salvation of men will be the consciousness during the week of such a consuming feeling, the irrepressible prayers which will well up in private and in family devotions for them, the practical efforts to bring them to the cross—efforts which need no pastoral stimulation, but which cannot be kept back. When such conditions exist in the Church a revival may be almost infallibly predicted.

There is much mechanical beseeching of the Lord to “make bare his mighty arm,” to manifest his power and grace in the conversion of men, and not enough candid heart-searching to know if really, in our deepest selves, we keenly feel the absolute necessity of the salvation of others. We are in grave danger of cant and unctuous pietism. If we actually desired the saving of men as much as our prayers would seem to imply, we would show our zeal in other ways. We may take it for granted that the Lord is willing at any time to display his converting power. He is never reluctant; he does not have to be greatly importuned to do a thing that he is constantly longing to do. Times and seasons do not count with him in such a matter as this. But he has made us his coadjutors in this solemn business, and if we fail, if we drop into artificial moods and lack blood-earnestness, then his grace, wanting the proper channel for its flowing, cannot reach the

hearts of men. We are the sluice-ways for his Spirit, and the dams must be lifted.

When Christians themselves act as if there was no need of any great or immediate and pressing concern for the conversion of men, it is not to be wondered at that unsaved men should regard themselves in the same light. Both they and their church friends seem to take it for granted that there is no need for any exceeding alarm. The subject of personal religion is rarely broached between Christian and non-Christian friends. Men in the world begin to think that the religious life is nothing much more than a decent going to church on Sunday and listening to a sermon and some choir music. And if they do not happen to like the preaching, and think they can hear better singing elsewhere, they conclude that the whole matter can be dropped out without any real or apparent loss. The old dogmas have lost all their force for them and they have no unpleasant anticipations of the future. They bank heavily on the infinite amiability of God and give retribution for sin little or no thought. They do not even realize that the spiritual life is one that must be definitely cultivated. "To do good and love men is my religion," they say—a noble ideal, but impossible of accomplishment outside of Christ. The prevalent conceptions of religion as a piece of ethics or a philanthropy only crowd out the underlying and necessary aspects of it as a profound regeneration of the spirit and reformation of life.

We are convinced that our current Christianity is largely responsible for these views which have proved such an opiate both within and without the Church. It is for the clergy and people alike and

together to realize what we have come to, to shake off somnolence and endeavor to bring back, not only in individuals but in the mass of Christians, that soul-thirst for the salvation of men which was in Bunyan, Baxter, and Wesley. Moody had it, and Campbell Morgan has it now. Would God we might all have it!

The duty of the hour, as it seems to us, is for all of our ministers to begin to preach earnestly, pointedly, lovingly to their people and show the sin of this comparative apathy and the necessity of more actual solicitude and warm-hearted activity in behalf of those about them still unrepentant and unsaved. An occasional sermon will not suffice. There must be a return to the theme again and again.

And on the part of all there must be an abandonment of merely nominal or respectably decent, half-way Christianity. There must be a determined effort to live out religion in all of its strength, reality, purity, and power. Christians must have done with all make-believes and manifest to the world their absolute sincerity and faith. Then may they expect that the world will take them at their word and come with them to seek a God of love and pardon, a Christ of mercy and saving efficiency. Resolutions of General Conferences, and General Assemblies, and General Conventions, commissions, preachers, all combined, will fail in revival effort unless a united and consecrated laity shall bring in addition to them the spirit of earnest conviction, prayer, and labor.

In hundreds of parishes all over our country each winter, ministers engage in evangelistic meetings in which their hearts and hopes are greatly wrapped

up. Shall they have the enthusiastic support and earnest efforts and prayers of, practically, their *whole* membership to aid them? That is the query which gives them most concern. The question of success or failure usually hinges right there. They can always count on a certain faithful *few* of the more devout to be present and to stay with them until the end; and for this they are grateful. But why should they not have the *entire* church body with them, hand to hand and heart to heart?

We are moved, therefore, to say some things about those who do not ordinarily count themselves with the very religious element of the churches, but who are certainly Christians when measured by the moral code of the New Testament. They feel that their religion is of the ethical type and does not easily adjust itself to the emotional or intenser forms. Nevertheless, they ought to identify themselves with the revival from the start. They need not be radically made over in their ways of religious expression. They need not imitate others whose language takes on a warmth which is not natural to themselves. But they, as much as any, need the help that the revival would bring. In most cases they are very practical business men, rubbing up against the world every day of every week, and with nearly all sentiment rather rudely knocked out of them. The world is with them soon and late, and they cannot help being affected by its ideals more or less. They are surrounded daily with all the temptations which beset men in the open and which swarm about the competitive business methods of our times. They cannot afford to leave piety to the piously inclined. To preserve their religion, to keep alive their love for

Christ, to revitalize the very morality which is the distinctive mark of their faith, they need to "get warmed up," to use an excellent old phrase. They may not have consciously backslidden, but many of them must confess that some more real fervor, some accession of a deeper love for their Saviour, would not be out of place for them, but that they need it rather sadly. They do not neglect the necessity for physical recuperation when the annual vacation time comes around. The soul-life must have its times of refreshment. This is recognized in the ritualistic churches during the Lenten season. The spiritual nature cannot endure, for every week in the year, the pressure of materialistic ideals—the thoughts of business and monetary success alone—without loss. It must have its rights and the special meetings will afford it untold good.

There ought never to be in any church such a wide separation as often exists between the "praying members" and the "paying members." The church should be a unit, however diversified the personalities constituting it, and should work together as one body. The praying members should pay and the paying members should pray. In a certain pastorate, where an unfortunate condition of affairs existed, we saw the trustees and stewards come out one night from an adjoining room where they had had a business meeting, march straight through the prayer room where revival services were being held, and all go out of the door!

Business men know full well that the revelations in business, civic, and social life of late make a loud demand for an intensification of the deeper being of individuals and society if we are not to lose our

grasp on the essential things that make us men. There must be a general revival for the sake of a better public morality. The sickening revelations of late years are enough to send thoughtful men to their knees imploring God to forgive, to purify, and strengthen all hearts and currents of living, lest we be lost as a nation. There are hopeful indications in many directions that the country is coming to its senses. There has been an awakening in the civic consciousness that is now going on, and we pray will make itself more and more felt. But this movement for a better righteousness, though really spiritual in its essence, as we believe, must, like all moral enthusiasms, be baptized in the Spirit and be strengthened and upheld by a devotional reconsecration to God.

It is increasingly the conviction of students of evangelistic efforts that, for the most enduring and satisfactory results, the churches must depend on their own pastors rather than upon the more spectacular methods of professional evangelists, no matter how seemingly successful. At any rate, we are driven to this, for the successful evangelists of the right stamp are altogether too few to serve the multitude of churches. But when the ordinary pastor, without the adventitious aids of novelty and advertising, and, perhaps, some sensationalism that he cannot bring himself to employ, commences his meetings, it is usually with a little band of class-meeting folk about him, the very ones whose spiritual natures are already pretty thoroughly cultivated, while a large contingent of respectable members are conspicuous by their absence, and show no interest from first to last. The attempt is almost discouraging from the beginning, and raises the pertinent ques-

tion whether any considerable numbers in our churches really care for a revival or not, or whether it is only a little band of old-fashioned persons who have it on their minds. Dr. Torrey, one of the most successful evangelists now before the public, declares that any church can have a revival if all its membership will get together and pray long enough, and then begin to work in earnest.

Think what might be accomplished if there could be a general rally of all those who seem so indifferent now! The audience rooms would be filled up; there would come encouragement to the pastor's heart and to all his little band of praying men and women; there would be an uplifting fervor of song; there would be a greater variety of testimony and exhortation; there would come the enthusiasm that always attends numbers animated by sublime thoughts; the church in all of its public services, and in its prayer and class meetings, would get a glow and momentum from such glorious times of refreshing.

More too: it would be inevitable that the outside public and the men and women leading sinful lives would be attracted. They could not keep away from such magnetic drawings. The problem now is how to get at the people who need conversion sadly enough, but who never come near the meetings designed for their benefit. And it is little wonder that they do not come when they are every day mixing with church members who themselves, they know, are not showing the smallest attention to the meetings. If the hard-headed, practical business men of our churches would only wake up to their duty, show themselves in the special services, work not for "a flash in the pan," or "a brushwood fire," or "a reli-

gious convulsion," as they are apt to term a revival, but for a fervent and permanent work of grace in the hearts of all, and then go among their associates on the street and in their places of business, and give them a simple invitation to join them in the house of God, we are convinced we should soon see a gratifying change in the religious condition of America.

There are doubtless many places which have seldom been agitated profoundly on religious matters, and in which no great awakening has occurred since their earliest history. But there has been much quiet and effective work done, and, in a steady way and without particular excitement, souls have been converted and gathered into the fold. There is sometimes a tendency on the part of earnest pastors and evangelists, judging everything by the frequency of distinctive and powerful revivals, to hold up such towns and churches to reproach and lamentation as being spiritually "twice dead." Yet the general religious aspect of many such churches; the attendance of the membership upon the Sabbath and week-day services; the conscientious efforts of the Sunday schools; the noticeable enthusiasm of the young people's meetings, and the spiritual power discernible in the other devotional gatherings, are manifest evidences that these parishes are not so altogether dead or apathetic as to justify imputations of a backslidden state, or compel a gloomy, hopeless estimate of their spiritual welfare. Instead of bemoaning their "deadness," thanks should be given to God for the grace wherein he is keeping his believers, and for those who are being added to the number of the saved through the ordinary ministration of the gospel from Sabbath to Sabbath.

We know that, in writing this, we are liable to be misinterpreted, and some will make haste to say that, by felicitating the people upon their goodness and spirituality, we are begetting a deadening complacency and Pharisaic self-congratulation; and they think it vastly better to describe, in vivid terms, the Church's dearth of religion and utter degeneracy, to denounce the sins and failures of Christ's brethren, and thunder anathemas upon the entire membership. We cannot believe that this is either an honest or a fruitful method. Its untruthfulness is felt, if not openly resented.

But, on the other hand, we are very far from desiring to lull any into a feeling of sweet assurance of the perfect satisfactoriness of their experience and attainments. Rather, without admitting the dyspeptic view with reference to such churches, we earnestly and affectionately exhort them to redouble their zeal with particular thought for the salvation of others. While regular and constant accessions to the Church throughout the year are the normal and healthy signs of a right religious activity, there is still abundant room and necessity for the periodic and specific revival, led by pastors and right-minded evangelists, to bring many a hesitating one, long in a Christian home, or attending Sabbath services, or found in the Sunday school, to the point of decision; and also for reaching those who rarely come to any church and confess little interest in religion. Churches may be neither careless nor worldly, and yet there is always a place in them for a larger consecration and a fuller inspiration for definite work in the saving of men.

There is a phrase—"the Chicago spirit"—which

is current in the West, and which has large significance in its application to churches and their zeal for the conversion of men. There are those who prophesy that Chicago will soon pass Paris, overtake New York, and perhaps London herself in her swift and gigantic growth. Theologians have their definitions of miracle. But, in the primary meaning of "a thing to be wondered at," Chicago is the standing miracle of the century past. As a testimony of what man can accomplish as he puts his own grandeur into material expression, subjecting all things to himself, subordinating the universe to his behests, she is a marvel of all time. The Seven Wonders of the World will have to be enlarged to make room for her. But they make a great mistake who see nothing in the great Western metropolis but multitudinous buildings, where, but a few years ago, were marshes; endless miles of streets, and huge palaces of commerce, boulevards, drives, parks, canals, statues, libraries, art galleries, club-houses, majestic public edifices, sumptuous residences, where, in the memory of living men, was an uninhabited wilderness. More than all these is the spirit of a great people, and better than all material expansion, more significant than heaped-up riches and amazing census returns, is the soul of a great municipality. Chicago has had faith, courage, persistency, and loftiness of aim, and there has been a glorious fulfillment to dream and endeavor. She has had heroism and hope, a progressive and undaunted mind, enthusiasm and confidence in her own power and destiny. Those who will can find many things to criticize in external matters and in her civic administration. Chicago—the most cosmopolitan city on the globe, with a popula-

tion more difficult to handle than that which any other great center possesses—has had her full share of the evils which afflict big towns. Nevertheless, they who look deep will see at work dynamic and irresistible forces that are constantly raising the level of public life and pushing wickedness to the wall. The tendency is upward and forward in all educational, religious, artistic, and moral affairs. The place is getting to be a strong literary center and its schools and colleges are making it famous. R. J. Campbell, the English divine, when asked lately what he thought Chicago lacked, replied, "Soul!" But he did not know—how could he, a passing visitor, know?—the real life of that great corporation of two million people.

What is the interpretation of "the Chicago spirit"? It describes the earnest coöperation of a citizenship to achieve a common good and fame for their city—the united, harmonious, aggressive action for specific, attainable results. Chicagoans have always stood together and worked together. Without this combined effort Chicago would never have been Chicago. Other towns where there was languid interest in improvement or progress, where there were bickerings and divided counsels and cross-purposes, where the leaders could not get together for coöperation, have been left hopelessly in the rear. It is true, necessity was upon Chicago's representative men for collective action. In the older East cities had grown gradually for two hundred years, but in the newer civilization of the West a decade had to do the work of a century. There was a demand for tremendous energy and the concerted influence of all. The result was accomplishment.

Would that in all Christendom, in all of the Churches of Christ, there might be the manifestation of "the Chicago spirit"! What might not be done, if, in the Church at large and in every local church, there could be fervent, wide-awake, intelligently directed zeal for the salvation of men and for the public good! "A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together" is what is needed for success, not only in cities but in churches, not only in business but in religion. If instead of feeble interest, opinionativeness, distracted and opposing plans, acrimoniousness, and quarrelsomeness—a state of affairs too frequently found—there could be in every church a "concert of prayer" and endeavor, the hearty, whole-souled unanimity which subordinates personal and selfish considerations to the general good, the embodiment of the splended "Chicago spirit" in mass-movements forward, there would certainly be speedier advance and more glorious accomplishment for Christ and his kingdom.

Many indications in the religious world are giving the Church good ground for hope for a better religious situation being speedily realized. The laymen are awakening and the Laymen's Missionary Movement is one of the marvels of our time. The laymen constitute the great body of the Church. They build its edifices, maintain its services, contribute to its great religious and philanthropic causes. They are the congregation to give audience to the truth. They support the minister who, in an earthly sense, is their servant, as, in the divine sense, he is the servant of Christ. They make up society, the community, city, State, and nation that the Church is commissioned to bless. If we consider

their numbers, their multitudinous interests, their instrumentalities ready to be used for the kingdom, their wealth, social and political influence and enormous capacity, actualized and latent, for work in Christ's cause, who shall say what they may not accomplish in evangelistic effort and missionary activity when once heartily enlisted? Along this same line the Brotherhood movement holds out great promise of multiplying the efficiency of the Church. "We believe that it is our duty, as servants and friends of Christ, to do good unto all men, to maintain the public and private worship of God, to hallow the Lord's Day, to preserve the sanctity of the family, to uphold the just authority of the State, and so to live in all honesty, purity, and charity that our lives shall testify to Christ. We joyfully receive the word of Christ, bidding his people go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, and declare unto them that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and that he will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. We confidently trust that by his power and grace all his enemies and ours shall be finally overcome, and the kingdoms of this world shall be made the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. In this faith we abide; in this service we labor; and in this hope we pray, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' "

This statement of the Brotherhood of the Presbyterian Church was accepted from the report of the Committee on Men's Societies appointed by a late General Assembly, and subsequently adopted by the Brotherhood of that church as their confession of faith and service. The more we study this creed the more compact, comprehensive, and virile it becomes

to us. It is thoroughly Christian, attaches men to the Master in a personal and loving service, and makes his Spirit the center of all life and activity. It is a living creed in that it is much more than an intellectual document. It breathes more of service and is designed to appeal particularly to men. In single sentences it touches the subjects of the Sabbath, the family, and the state, and consecrates the members of the Brotherhood to a holy regard for the purity and perpetuation of these divine institutions. The subject of world-wide evangelism is the crowning note of this remarkable profession: "We confidently trust that by his power and grace all his enemies and ours shall be finally overcome, and the kingdoms of this world shall be made the kingdom of our God and of his Christ." A Brotherhood with such an ideal and embodiment of faith and consecration to service will undoubtedly be a force and power.

The Brotherhood movement will do much toward solving the problem of how to bring men to church and under the converting influence of the gospel. There is universal complaint of the comparative absence of men from church services. We refuse to believe that there is any general demoralization among the male population, or such a habit of neglect and carelessness that it cannot be remedied. There must be, first, manliness in the preacher, and he must present a manly Christ and a virile, robust gospel. Then the church must be made a solar place, radiating gladness and warm-heartedness. It must be made attractive, not so much by paltry novelties and gimcrack inventions to "entertain," but by its whole-souled good-fellowship. The words "brother" and "sister" must be rescued from any possible

sanctimonious odor into which they have fallen, and be made to represent a true "gold coinage" of speech. The one obstacle that the faithful pastor, in trying to build up his membership and get men into the fold, runs against more frequently than any other, is that the church is cold and unsociable. "I went there a number of times and they froze me out. Not a person spoke to me. You'll never get me within those doors again." Perhaps the complainant is somewhat to blame. Perhaps he didn't wait and give the people a chance, but slipped out from his rear pew immediately after the benediction. And perhaps—perhaps what he said is lamentably true. The pastor has prayed for "the stranger within our gates"—and that is all. We have known this situation, even when the church was protesting, by all that was good, that there never was such a sociable people as they. So they were—among themselves. But the visiting worshiper, who did not belong to any of the little hand-shaking groups of cordial folk, was too frequently unnoticed. Such a demeanor handicaps the pastor to the very point of sheer discouragement.

It has been stated, and we believe it true, that no preacher, however eloquent, can fill his church to-day by the attraction of his sermons. If the church is filled, it will be because the whole membership has coöperated, and with loving attention and courteous persuasion, addressed to friends and neighbors, "compelled them to come in." Those churches, like the temple of Dr. Russell Conwell, of Philadelphia, which have complete and well-drilled organizations to use sociability in the service of religion, are crowded to the doors. There is a current religious colloquialism—the pastor, it is said, must be a "good

mixer." But is there not an equal demand on each member for such a qualification?

There is an easy remedy for half-filled auditoriums and deserted "Sunday night services." There is a method by which, in revival services, others may be found besides church members and the "faithful" who are always at prayer meeting. Every member of the Church should be a recruiting sergeant. If those who are "gospel-logged" and dying of a dyspepsia of preaching from overfeeding, a gout of religion, an obesity of piety, a spiritual "fatty degeneration of the heart," brought on by lack of exercise, would interest themselves in normal and spontaneous ways in other people, the results would not be long waiting to justify such activity. What a power might the Church utilize if the latent potentialities of its membership would only become real and practical. Might we not expect, then, a mighty forward movement in Christianity?

It is sometimes claimed that people will be frequently driven away by the approaches of crude zealots seeking to convert others and perfunctorily discharging what they regard as a religious duty, intrusively overriding the proper limits of delicacy. It is represented that religion is a thing so personal, the soul-life something so sacred, that most people resent peremptory and rude inquiry about it. They maintain a rightful reserve, which is offended by officious brusqueness in others who have a stand-and-deliver manner of asking whether those they meet are Christians or not. It may be that there is need of this warning. There must be something besides zeal to win men to Christ—there must be infinite tact, consideration, preparation by prayer, and much study of

the Scriptures, and meditation on method. But, ordinarily, the true Christian, who has learned the gentleness of Jesus, who is influenced by a real and not a galvanized love for his brother whom he would approach, who has the experience of the Christ-filled life, will make few or no mistakes. By all means let him address himself to the important work at once.

It was after the foregoing pages had been written and while this volume was awaiting the press that the marvelous "Men and Religion" Movement began its activities. The Movement embraces in its program not only spiritual ends but, broadly, all redemptive efforts—physical, mental, social, civic—for men individually and collectively. It insists that "religion is a man's job." It pledges men for attendance at Sunday and mid-week services; invites and accompanies to worship the neglectful; supports Bible study and lecture classes; works with and for boys, both religiously and recreationally; labors in evangelistic campaigns; organizes Sunday schools and institutes; forms inter-church federations; coöperates with labor unions, civic and social reform bodies, and home and foreign missionary boards—and much else.

A battalion of about thirty picked men moves from city to city, and everywhere it has gone there has been a wonderful awakening. Its leaders say: "We have tried ethical culture, various rationalistic philosophies, and the enforcement of law. The one thing left with which to remedy wrong doing and wrong thinking is religion. If we can arouse the spirit of true and sincere religion among the men of this continent—so they will put it in actual practice—we have a sure cure for existing evils."

CHAPTER XII

IDEALS AND METHODS IN EVANGELISM

WITHOUT question the imperative necessity for success in moving men out of positive sinfulness or religious indifference into a state of readiness to accept the gospel conditions is a feeling on their part that those who are urging them along evangelical lines are absolutely sincere. There is no doubt that those who came under the influence of John Wesley, Whitefield, and the early Methodists never questioned the entire disinterestedness and sincerity of these leaders and disciples. In Wesley's case to engage a man—any man, even the hostler who tied up his horse—almost from the moment of meeting, in religious conversation was as natural as breathing. There was nothing forced or artificial about it, nothing put on, nothing done under pressure of unwelcome obligation. Everything was spontaneous and unaffected.

If there could be more of that spirit in our modern ministers, it would be far better. We fear that many unconverted people somehow get the impression that the appeals from the pulpit are, in too many cases, rather mechanical and perfunctory; that the minister is "just preaching"; that his attitude toward them is predominately professional and not directly human; that he is talking to them like a parson and not as man to man; that the time of year usually designated for revival services having arrived, his zeal for the conversion of souls is the thing

that may be expected, and he, accordingly, gives himself up to the proper amount of enthusiasm.

Now, the unconverted man may not put the matter quite as explicitly before himself as this. But he may have a vague feeling which brings about the same results. If he sees the minister apparently vastly concerned about his salvation during four weeks in the year, and then apparently quite unconcerned for the remaining forty-eight weeks, he is apt to think that his solicitude for him is neither very real, intense, or abiding, and he discounts the sermonic invitations and exhortations by so much.

And is he not excusable? Is not his suspicion founded upon some reasonable considerations? Exactly the same attitude of mind will be taken toward the evangelist if the unconverted hearer gets to imagining, perhaps with some degree of reason, that the speaker is talking to the galleries, saying a lot of startling things just for effect and the sensationalism of the moment.

Sunday is coming and the minister has to have his two sermons ready. It's his business. By that sermon-making craft he earns his bread. If it is in the winter, he must meet expectations and preach revival sermons. During the spring and summer he can return to other themes. Our preachers do not consciously succumb to these insidious suggestions. We believe them, as a class, to be as absolutely sincere and earnest in their intentions as it is given to mortals to be. But, nevertheless, there stands that danger of professionalism against which they must constantly be on their guard. No preacher ought to take any theme, or utter any sentiment, or make any entreaty bearing upon the salvation of men without

directly searching himself and asking whether, down in the bottom of his soul, he really believes it all, and feels it, or whether—God forbid!—he is simply proclaiming it in unconscious obedience to a traditional orthodoxy, rehearsing a theology of the schools rather than the innermost conviction of his own deepest self.

That minister will surely have converts, will never fail in turning men's feet into the paths of life, if, as they observe him in his private as well as his public life, in his everyday behavior as well as in his Sunday and "special service" demeanors, throughout the year as well as in the revival season, men outside of the kingdom are compelled to say: "That is an honest, sincere, whole-souled man! He believes through and through what he says. He is manifestly concerned for me. He declares that I need Christ, that my life will not be complete without him, that the Christless life stands in insufficiency here and in jeopardy hereafter. He affirms positively that Christ can make a changed man of me, and he speaks it in a way that convinces me that he believes it himself without mental reservation. There is no smallest doubt that he is altogether persuaded that Christ is an absolute necessity for my life, that without him there is no salvation for me."

When such an impression is made, conversions are certain to follow. Such sincerity in convictions is as sure to affect men as the flaw in conviction is to leave them untouched.

And the same truth applies to the members of our churches. If only in prayer meetings and in revival services or at set times they express concern for the religious welfare of others, the super-

ficiality and artificiality of it will be apparent, and the unconverted will scarcely take at their face value their pious expressions of apprehension. One of our English religious papers declares that it is being said in many quarters that "the typical Christian cares little or nothing for those that are outside, and regards the Church as a comfortable and exclusive society existing for himself and fellow members, rather than as a mighty agency, eager in purpose and sacrificial in spirit, for reconciling the world to God." In many ordinary churches, the writer asserts, "there is little or no effort to get the outside people in, and if they do come, there is not a very hearty welcome."

Laymen over there are affirming that such an attitude constitutes a denial of the very element of the Christian spirit. One says, "The Church does not expect conversions." Another, a local preacher for more than forty years and a steward for nearly twenty, "The passion for God has gone out of the churches, and with it the yearning expectancy for conversions." Such expressions may be too exaggerated and pessimistic, but it would indeed seem that any church has in its own membership the sure conditions of a successful revival. Permit us to quote the Methodist Recorder of London on this subject: "There is no doubt that much of the fire of the pulpit lies in the pew, that a congregation can melt an iceberg if it should chance to be in the pulpit. There is an amazing contribution to the wonderful works of God in the tone and instinct of a congregation. It is no use trying to get away from the fact. Every preacher knows it; and every observant member of a congregation has felt the power of an

assembly before the preacher has so much as come into the pulpit. It is no use putting the whole blame of sterility in the matter of converting power upon the shoulders of the preacher. The greater part of it is in another place, and the sooner it is recognized the better. What is one against five hundred, if the five hundred be of one heart? If all the people come together, having desired in the right way, and at the right place, and come in a spirit of expectant love, very little indeed depends upon the pulpit. The Church has never been dependent upon officials and leaders, nor even on prophets; it depends on God alone. Who has not known revivals that have broken out, that have fallen as it were from heaven, without the intervention of any preacher, because all of the people were of one mind and heart? That is one side of a grave difficulty; and when a preacher goes into the pulpit, however much evangelical passion he may have in his heart, there will be a falling of his words as upon empty air, if there is an emptiness in the pews."

Not long since the *Christian Guardian*, of Toronto, quoted a clergyman (not a Methodist) as saying, in a discussion, with earnestness and conviction that left no doubt as to his sincerity, "I am not an evangelist; I am sorry for it, but I am not an evangelist." Back of the words there evidently lay the yearning of the true pastor's heart for the unsaved of his congregation; the evangelistic passion was there, but the skill of the evangelist had been, as he thought, denied.

And yet, perhaps, this brother interpreted evangelism too narrowly. In a true sense every faithful and consistent follower of Jesus Christ, who in his

own daily life illustrates the teaching of his Master, and reincarnates his Spirit, is an evangelist. He is verily proclaiming in one of the best ways possible the truth of Christ and the fact of Christ before men. Even though he do not preach or testify, or strive to persuade men to accept salvation by personally pleading with them, being deterred, perhaps, as we have said, in the latter, by some native diffidence or feeling of incapacity or deference for another's sacredness of personality, he is still, even in his unconscious influence, an evangelist. He is a fisher of men, and though he may not know it, others are being led to higher spiritual levels through his quiet working out of the gospel in commonplace duties.

There is evangelism and evangelism, there are evangelists and evangelists. We mistake if we identify evangelism with only one type of preaching, though popularly we use the word to designate a specific sort of work. For this sort doubtless certain natural endowments combine to make a man a success for this particular field. Such a man might not succeed as well as his brother in a regular pastorate; but the main strength of the Church must be in its regular pastorates.

But there is no use trying to evade or obscure the very obvious fact, which Saint Paul clearly recognized, that there are diversities of gifts. He speaks of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and they were all engaged in the work of perfecting the saints, ministering, the building up of the body of Christ. Paul did not disparage either apostle, prophet, pastor, or teacher because he was not technically an evangelist. In the broad sense, if not

specifically, they were all doing evangelistic work, but not all in the same way. A man is as God made him, and the responsibility for his personality and temperament must be thrown back upon God. A man must take himself as he is and do the work he can. He cannot make himself over and be like somebody else, try as he may. He will do his best work in the world by being absolutely true to his own individuality and genius. No matter how ardently some of our best ministers might covet the number of converts that a Thomas Harrison, or a "Billy" Sunday or a Torrey or a Chapman or a Munhall might have put down to them, they could no more be like those men or act like them or talk like them than they could fly. And they might as well accommodate themselves to that inevitable fact, stop apologizing for supposed shortcomings, and quit disparaging themselves and accusing themselves of defects which are no defects, but simply variations in mental and constitutional make-up. Let each man do his own work, in his own fashion, in his own appointed field, according to his own best lights, and leave to God the rest. Any other course is sure to lead to enervating self-depreciation and self-distrust—to the loss of heart and hope and efficiency.

If God has created a man with a philosophical and speculative turn of mind, and with a love for literature or poetry or science, and afterward by his Spirit calls that man into the ministry, how can anything else be expected than, in presenting gospel truth, such a preacher will spontaneously, following his native bent, run it into philosophical molds, effectively illustrating it with literary references, poetical quotations, or scientific facts? Some other

preacher, who has neither the disposition nor the taste for this, who is not led to it by any inborn inclination and habit of mind, may affect to scorn and severely criticize such preaching and preachers. But if it be real preaching—earnest, honest, sincere, helpful—such criticism is very foolish and uncalled for. The Church needs all sorts of servants, and monotony and stereotyped uniformity are as bad in her pulpits as anywhere else. Wisdom is justified of her children, and the history of Christianity has shown how excellent in results has been the work of many ministers whose preaching might be cynically referred to as “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.” They have quickened spiritual impulses and stood for righteousness and denounced evils.

Nevertheless, we believe, as we have previously contended, that preachers of this class would do well to watch themselves lest their innate tendencies become too pronounced and give a somewhat one-sided aspect to their preaching. Their philosophical reading must not usurp the place of Bible study. And if they will cultivate that personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, if they will seek closeness of communion with God, if they will be fervent in prayer, the evangelistic instinct will certainly grow in them, and whatever form their message may take, it will glow with earnestness, conviction, and saving power for men. To count converts and to bring them into the Church is a blessed privilege, and many preachers of the class we are describing could, perhaps, have much more success than they imagine if, in their own way, they would definitely try to concentrate their efforts to such an end. Nevertheless, even where such fruit-

age is not numerically in evidence, there should not be discouragement. No man who tries faithfully to present Christ and his gospel can tell the good he is doing. The seed falls into unsuspected furrows, and grows secretly and springs up, and the sower may not know that it came from his casting.

The editor of the *Guardian* says: "Some men seem to be peculiarly adapted to what we call evangelistic work, and other men seem to have a peculiar power to strengthen and consolidate the Church, while a few men seem to have the power to change the whole spiritual tone of the Church, and cause it to reach a distinctly higher level. Others again seem born for the express purpose of waging war against unrighteousness, and the community where they dwell is certain to see the inauguration of a campaign for civic and national purity."

In each case let us sing our *Te Deums* and *Glorias* to the God who "fulfills himself in many ways," and for whom

Thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest.

The present is no time for criticism and captiousness. No one is having such large and enduring success in evangelism as to entitle him to fling scorn at his less conspicuous brother or speak contemptuously of his modest word of suggestion. Every allowance must be made for individuality and every man must be true to his own talent. Many a pastor who has never headed "A Great Revival" has, by quiet methods among young people and others, and by systematic pastoral and pulpit work, built up strong and growing memberships which were added to Sunday by Sunday from thoughtful followers quietly adopt-

ing the Christian life. The present religious situation is confessedly so difficult of diagnosis, so baffling to the most consecrated and zealous effort, that, in the emergency, light ought to be welcomed from any quarter. Everyone who has a word that he thinks has promise in it ought to be encouraged to speak it. There must be the frankest conference and the utmost consideration and patience. Dogmatism is ruled out altogether.

It may be true that we have come to that stage of darkness which is the surest precursor to the dawn—to that point of man's importunity which is God's opportunity. This might seem to be the lesson of the revival in Wales, which seemed to burst out spontaneously without engineering. It was after the order of Melchizedek, without committees, without commissions, without constitution, having neither beginning in motions nor end in organization. It was in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

We do not wish to intimate anything seemingly derogatory to the present organization, in any Church, of machinery whose mission is to promote aggressive evangelism. The idea of such "commissions" is excellently conceived. In spiritual campaigns, as in military and political ones, there must, doubtless, be careful foresight and planning. The human element cannot be overlooked. Man must coöperate with God, and that coöperation must not be careless and haphazard. Nevertheless, spiritual movements must be spiritually inspired and controlled, and our trust must not be so much in methods and machinery as in the energizing and directing

Deity and the free and responsive spirit of man. In evangelism, as in missionary enterprise, success comes "not by an army, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," and this great truth would be immediately admitted by every member of any commission on evangelism.

In a symposium on evangelism, to which some fifty or more writers made brief contributions, it was significant to observe how many emphasized the need of doing direct, personal work—of talking in earnest, sensible fashion to unconverted people about their spiritual needs. The majority of the writers, while advocating the public meetings, were convinced that this face-to-face and heart-to-heart work, man with man, soul with soul, friend with friend, carried on by both pastor and members, not perfunctorily or under the stress of "duty" only, but on the promptings of a real interest and an earnest love, ought never to be omitted. It was vital and indispensable. And in these conversations there must be such a simple-hearted motive, and such a sincere wish to help others, that the resulting naturalness shall banish all touches of professionalism—all stilted talk, pietistic platitudes, stock phrases, and other artificialities, which are immediately detected, felt, and drawn away from. Honesty, straightforwardness, and evident friendship and concern, however haltingly the words may come, will never offend. They have a potency in them which is well-nigh irresistible. We believe that the chief obstacle in the whole situation is the present difficulty in filling Christians with this down-right conviction concerning their neighbor's spiritual good, and arousing in them the same spirit

which led Andrew to find Peter and Philip to find Nathanael.

That the "people of the abyss," as Jack London calls them—men worse than "down and out," the utterly wretched and used-up, the defeated, demoralized, disgusted victims of vice and slaves of sin—should listen to any gospel promise which offered help and salvation is scarcely to be wondered at. If there is any sensibility left, those who have touched bottom must feel their moral destitution, the failure and wreck of their lives, and grasp eagerly and desperately at any proffer of assistance and recovery. This is the reiterated story of the city missions in the Boweries and Water Street, the slums of London, New York, and Chicago, and among the depraved and lost who recruit the ranks of the "twice-born." Their situation could not be worse. They know it perfectly well; and the evangelist knows it too, and can confidently assure them that any change at all will certainly be a change for the better, and that Christ offers them everything in the place of the nothing they have.

But the situation is considerably changed when evangelism is attempted among those of a social stratum much above that of the "depressed" and "submerged." We do not have in mind exclusively the very rich, or even the wealthy, though these are included in what we are about to say. But we are thinking of the great mass of people in moderate or well-to-do circumstances, safely above the poverty line and with no anxiety about possible material want; people who live in respectable homes, wear pretty good clothes, have plenty to eat, enjoy themselves, move in very reputable society circles, have

the esteem of their neighbors, maintain their credit, hold an excellent business reputation, have improved their educational advantages, keep within the bounds of established morality. If such as these seem quite indifferent to the claims of the definitely religious life; if they give no evidence of any thought or concern about their spiritual development; if the Bible, prayer, the Sabbath, the services of the church have little place in their lives, a problem not easy of solution is presented. Most of them may not belong at all to the "worldly," or dissipated or reckless class, or to the devotees of pleasure. Their habits are good. But they are so completely comfortable and satisfied that physical deprivation furnishes no leverage by which they may be lifted up onto any spiritual plane.

The whole tendency of our modern times makes for this state of mind. By the discoveries of science, by the multiplication of modern labor-saving inventions, by the extensions of commerce, conveniences and luxuries even, unattainable in former days, have been brought into the homes of thousands. The world is becoming a more and more desirable place in which to live. Its hardships are being constantly eliminated. Existence is easy and enjoyable for an increasing number. "The good things of life" within reach are found very satisfying. The spread of socialistic teachings and of the doctrines of Christian Science and similar cults has presented purely physical well-being as a gospel goal.

We are far from deploring this growth of comfort in living. In and by itself it is something to rejoice in. Increasingly man is being raised in the scale of his activities and is less and less a mere beast of

burden. Steam and electricity are lifting the loads off his back, and, in factory and home, machinery is replacing human fiber and muscle. This is a by-product of Christianity. The laboring and the heavy-laden are finding in the material realm relief and rest, whereof all sane thinkers must be glad. It is only when these multiplied physical advantages seem to stifle, by their satisfactions, the hunger of the soul, that evil results.

We believe that, to meet this problem, in ordinary preaching there should be a pretty constant insistence upon the necessity of a definite cultivation of the Godward side of human nature, of a specific attainment of spirituality in addition to correctness of deportment. Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every God-given thought and aspiration. The utter insufficiency of the purely secular life must be shown, the inability of merely material goods to satisfy the deepest cravings of the soul which may starve amid earthly plenty. The special needs of the spirit in its devotional aspects, in its recognition of God and communion with him, in its appreciation of the mind of Christ and in daily intercourse with his Spirit, ought to be so repeatedly dwelt upon that the latent capacities in the hearts of the hearers would awake in response. The man, it must be shown, is only half-man until the powers and receptivities of the soul have come to expression.

Many cases of those in whom the spiritual sense seems quite undeveloped will need to be treated individually. The pastor or evangelist will best draw them out in private, serious conversation. It may be that the lurking question, "What lack I yet?" is really making them somewhat uncomfortable. It

may be that they are "not far from the kingdom of God." If their lives are resting upon a sure foundation, they ought to be encouraged with the thought that this is the main, the essential thing in religion; that in that far (and it is very far) they are Christians, and that what is further required is the conscious turning of the soul in trust, love, and adoration toward the Father, and the "practice of the presence of God" in a life of spiritual joy, peace, and holiness.

The Christian life should be presented to such as an inestimable privilege that they cannot afford to miss. To quote Henry C. King: "Emerson says: 'Profligacy consists not in spending years of time, or chests of money, but in spending them off the line of your career.' In like manner to be 'lost' is to be lost off the line of God's own will for us, lost away from home, and from the Father's presence, and from the loving spirit of his life. To be 'saved,' on the other hand, is the simple sharing in the Father's life, and in his love for men."

Denunciation, warning, threatening have their place. But, for the pulpit of to-day, the consequences of sin must be stated, not in literalistic pictures of flame and bodily torture, but ethically, interpreting rationally the New Testament metaphors, in the terrible results in character. Yet, after this, the putting of religious experience as privilege, as the highest conception of life's best investment of itself, will always appeal most convincingly to reasonable men and women. Many of them are already actively philanthropic and can be touched along the line of their humane impulses. They love their fellow men. Christ taught that love to him was in-

volved and implied in such love. Love being present in the heart, they ought to be helped to extend it to God, who is their neighbor also, and to render spiritual service as well as social service.

And where the humanitarian emotions are dormant the appeal for the religious life might well be made on the necessity of "more laborers in the vineyard" of humanity, where there is so much suffering, so many good causes that need help, so many evils to be combated. There is need of a new chivalry and of new Crusaders. "Repent," cried both John and Jesus, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Christ wants fellow workers, men freed from the handicap of sin, and willing to be used by him in the regeneration of the world. His voice sounds forth, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and a multitude of the self-contented, standing idle in the market place, ought to answer, stirred by the word of the gospel message, "Here are we; send us!"

Is it not true of most of us that our duties in relation to the conversion of others seem to sit upon our consciences quite lightly except during some revival season or under the urgency of some stressful sermon? It is not to be imagined that the unconverted do not detect a certain artificiality in an appeal at such times from people who, during most of the year, meet them daily, but show, not only no concern about them, but even no particular thought. Is it not somewhat natural that they should betray a little resentment when, in the lack of real interest and sympathy for them, they are made the objects of a galvanized solicitude? We heard of one such case lately where the unconverted young man, who loved

sincerity and afterward united with the Church, explained his refusal to "go forward" where the circumstances were such as we have described. "I wasn't going to gratify him," he said, "and then have him go around everywhere and brag how he had landed me."

We are no advocate of the endless-chain method in letter-writing for the purpose of obtaining charitable or other funds. It has proved itself to be an imposition on individuals, and, unless many should venture to do that atrocious and wicked thing—"break the chain"—the final amounts gathered would exceed the figures measuring the fixed stars. But there is another form of endless chain that we would recommend that was suggested to us by the remark attributed to a sagacious political leader in a great city. He called his workers together and said to them: "Now, I don't expect each one of you to win all the voters of the city over to our party, and I don't want any of you to try it. All I want each of you to do is to start out and convince a single man that he must vote our ticket, get his promise, and then make him also promise to go out and find another man whom he will work over in the same way. Then you can commence on another fellow."

It is our conviction that this "still hunt," as the politicians call it, is one of the very best methods to pursue in an evangelistic campaign. We believe that this concentration of effort on a single and definite end which is not so general as to be confusing, not so formidable as to be discouraging, is one of the best suggestions that can be employed in lay activity for conversions. If the politician's way of laboring for one at a time, and then turning the fresh

conquest out to do a similar thing, and so on indefinitely until the network of agents covers the whole population—if this strategic plan could be followed in the Church, we believe there would be many more conversions.

The "Win-One Society" is the suggestive name of an admirable organization in the churches. Its motto is, "Win one by one." Its conditions of membership are subscription to the following covenant:

"1. To give ONE period of fifteen minutes daily, preferably during the first morning hour, to personal Bible study, meditation, and secret prayer.

"2. To be ONE to pray definitely and daily for myself, my pastor, my church, and my community, that there may be a genuine revival in at least that ONE church, and in that ONE community.

"3. To count ONE, unless providentially prevented, in the preaching services on Sunday, ONE in the weekly prayer-meeting, ONE in the special evangelistic services whenever held, and to bring ONE with me whenever possible.

"4. To endeavor to win ONE to Christ at the first opportunity, and to continue to win ONE by one as the Holy Spirit shall give me grace and guidance.

"5. To invite at least ONE to unite with the WIN-ONE SOCIETY, and to use the influence of ONE consecrated life to the furtherance of the principles advocated therein."

The society has no officers and no meetings. Inside the general society there are "Circles" connected, as in the Chautauqua organization, with the local church. The Win-One Circle is a small company of earnest Christians who desire to be successful soul winners, and who will agree to meet at a

stated season for the definite study and practice of winning others to Christ. It means not only the theory but the work of soul-winning. The Circle is composed of all that hunger for soul-winning efficiency. Young people especially—Sunday school teachers, earnest young men and women in our Sunday schools, and particularly those who have just begun the Christian life—these, and all whom they can persuade to a like service, should be among the first to form a Win-One Circle.

The Rev. Dr. Charles S. Mills tells of some methods he has employed in building up a membership which has increased with remarkable rapidity and steadiness, following natural lines of activity. His account is so full of suggestiveness, and ought to be so particularly helpful to pastors, that we transfer his enumeration of "special methods" and give them prominent place and emphasis here:

"The inspiration of public worship lifted to the highest plane of attractiveness and dignity, chorus and soloists working directly with the pastor to bring unity and power.

"The development of an atmosphere in the Church calculated to promote Christian nurture and magnifying the Christian life as the only one worth living.

"The employment of the Sunday school as a powerful evangelizing agent in the contact of a mature Christian mind with those in process of development, it being understood that the teachers of the older classes must assume the chief responsibility in leading those committed to their care into the Christian life.

"The systematic presentation of the meaning, principles, and claims of Christianity to children

from twelve to sixteen years of age in a Christian nurture class, marked by great interest and enthusiasm.

“The exaltation of the imperative of personal service by the entire membership, so that the Church accepts the clear conviction that the harvest depends primarily upon definite, prayerful, individual effort.

“The adaptation of the work of the Church to the life of the community, ministering daily to its needs in a multitude of forms, infusing every method with the spirit of Christian consecration and utilizing every point of contact as an opportunity to lead men to the highest life.”

It is doubtless true that many pastors have reacted against the mechanism of too much method and too many patented devices for getting men into the kingdom. They do not believe that the Holy Spirit is to be compelled by means of any new inventions for getting men to commit themselves to a Christian life when they seem indifferent to honest, straightforward appeal and loving persuasion. Nevertheless, there must be some principles which should be kept clearly in mind to furnish guidance in all revival efforts.

It must be clearly discerned, in the first place, that the citadel to be carried is the man's will, and anything that stops short of changing that fundamental will fails. “Anything which is designed to sweep a non-Christian hearer along with the crowd,” says a writer on this theme, “anything which would tend to sway a man with an evanescent emotion, is meretricious and should be rigidly disowned by Christian workers.” We must respect the personality of those for whose spiritual good we are laboring; and we do

not respect it, but rather insult it, when we employ any artifice to lead them to act impulsively, under a transient impression, and not with a solemn and deliberate decision of will, which is to be sincere and final.

It is astonishing, when we reflect upon it, that, with all the preaching of various dogmas and doctrines and any amount of exhortation, there is so seldom a series of clear, simple sermons, telling explicitly what it is to be a Christian. With some little irreverence, but with no little pertinence, the unconverted have sometimes retorted, "Why don't you stop teasing us to 'come to Jesus' long enough to really tell us what you mean by the phrase?" Of course, there is a general conception of the character of the claims of Christ abroad in the community, but when it comes to individual action men want specific information and direction. Although the demands of our faith are very simple, they need to be repeated again and again in varied and freshened phrase, for unconverted men frequently make the matter too complex and difficult, and implicate it with any amount of confusing theology. They do not understand the simplicity which is in Christ, and therefore there must be a large and luminous instructional element in all evangelistic exhortation.

While, as we have said above, it is the will which must be influenced, it goes without saying that this cannot be done by any frigid presentation of truth or unmoved listening to it. "A man may take Christ dry-eyed, but no man ought to take Christ in cold blood." It is incredible that such a transaction as the repentance and forsaking of sin and the acceptance of a Saviour should be unaccompanied by the

profoundest feelings. These feelings are not the final test of conversion or of the Christian life, for that life must evidence itself in great principles of conduct. But the emotions necessarily attend and indicate the great change, and no dread of any excitement or "fanaticism" ought ever to stifle them. The intelligent comprehension of what Christ would have men become and do, the awakening and determination of the will to do it, the vow of consecration in the warmth of a heartfelt emotion—these are the great requisites to be kept in mind in all evangelical activity.

What, then, may be considered the best presentation of the gospel for our age, particularly in moving men to accept Christ?

There is agreement upon the statement that all ministers must recognize, and accommodate themselves to the fact, that ours is a peculiarly undogmatic age and that the truth must be put in other forms. There must be careful and systematic teaching as to the primary elements of Christianity, and plain, definite, comprehensible instruction as to what it is to be a Christian. Even at the risk of apparent sameness there must be constant reiteration of the essentials of the faith. The lesson as to what is involved in being a follower of Christ is not learned all at once or easily. One repetition will not suffice. After the manner of the secular teacher in the classroom, it must be patiently gone over again and again. And the pastor-teacher must have mastered the lesson himself, must be able to tell in clear language exactly what is meant by repentance and faith in Christ, and that not in worn formulas and trite theological phrases which convey little to the hearer

or which have lost pointedness through over-use, but in the vernacular of to-day which all men can understand. And this means hardest study and closest thought on the part of the minister.

It would indeed seem to be the easiest thing in the world for anyone to tell a thoughtful inquirer how to be saved. One has only to say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," and the direction is assuredly and abundantly true. But, when the inquirer further asks what it is to believe, and "What am I to do after I have believed?" there is certainly room and necessity for the most precise and particular statement, and it is here where most spiritual directors are too general and hazy. They have taken it for granted too easily that everyone knows the requirements of Christianity, and that line-by-line instruction is not required at this late day. And perhaps, too, they have carelessly assumed that they themselves understood fairly well what is definitely meant by the Christian life. But even in this twentieth century prominent theologians are debating strenuously the question, "What is Christianity?" and there is the widest diversity of reply. It certainly is no easy task to separate the Christianity of Christ from that of the schools—to discover the few essential principles and sift them out from the surrounding accretion of theology and tradition. It is doubtful whether many could do this offhand. And yet there is a crying demand for clean-cut work of this sort. With all the literature that is published there are few manuals that can be put into the hands of serious and intelligent men which will guide them by sure and graduated steps into a clear perception of what is required of them as to belief

and practice in a religious life. Many are convinced too that the preaching of to-day is too scattering. The sermons of a year do not develop on any consecutive plan, and, indeed, have little relationship at all. There is a perceptible demand that, as in some great argument, or as in the chapters of an unfolding book, Christian truth shall be proclaimed from the pulpit.

It is interesting to note the general trend of the themes preached at a successful revival in Taianfu, Shantung Province, China. The great emphasis in the preaching was laid on the following:

God—his power, love, mercy, pity, compassion, hatred of sin; Jesus Christ—his coming, proving the matchless love of God, and his own love, in being willing to endure the insults and scorn of the world and the agony of Gethsemane and the cross, to redeem us from our sins; Jesus—"The Friend of sinners"; the Holy Spirit—his work in convicting of sin, leading to repentance, and renewing the nature distorted and ruined by the fall, enabling us to know Christ and the Father, and making real to each believer all the preciousness that comes from an experimental acquaintance with both in the heart; sin—its heinousness in God's sight, and disastrous effect on us, alienating us from God and corrupting the nature, and, if persisted in, entailing eternal punishment, but if repented and forsaken, forgiven and blotted out. The Chinese were urged to seek definitely for the witness of the Spirit—the assurance that they had been "born again."

In every theological seminary, it has been suggested, there should be a special chair established, with the right professor occupying it, which should give definite instruction as to spirit and method in

evangelism to the young men about to become preachers. Why would not that idea be practical? The students are taught how to construct sermons and in theory how to deliver them, but most of them graduate without much knowledge of the art of persuading and winning men and getting them to commit themselves to Christ. They do not know how to address themselves to the wills of men so as to induce conviction and action. One would think that this was of prime importance in those whose chief business it is to be to get men into the kingdom. Our chief criticism of the theological seminary, as we knew it in our student days, was that it taught about everything else except how to preach. It is true that there was purely theoretic book-instruction in homiletics. But, except for a trial sermon or two before the student body, there was no instruction in the practice of preaching itself. The student had to learn this for himself after graduation, much as most boys learn to swim by either falling into deep water or being pitched over. And yet preaching was to be their life business. They graduated with a considerable knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, systematic theology, and exegesis, but their knowledge was too scholastic. They felt themselves practically confused and helpless when it came to giving specific directions to inquirers.

Again: many pastors experience a practical difficulty—that of preparing a suitable sermon or thoughtful exposition and exhortation for each night of a protracted revival season, besides thinking out the two regular sermons for Sunday, and giving proper attention to the number of individual inquirers seeking direction and aid religiously. No man

can do all these things long and do them well without an overstrain, particularly at a time when the sympathies and emotions are kept at a high tension for a considerable period. The drain on the vitality is too great.

During each summer season, as occasion may admit, we think it would be advisable for every pastor to have the coming winter's special services in mind. Let him fix upon a series of brief evangelical discourses, connecting and cumulating, with a good selection of illustrations and verifiable incidents, and outline them well on paper, doing beforehand most of the work necessary on them for full presentation, so that with comparatively little more labor he can have them ready for delivery. It would be well if this plan could also include the discourses for the Sabbath. With such a definite and complete preparation, when the extra services are begun, the pastor can find time for much personal visitation and conversation with the seriously disposed whom he may win to surrender to Christ. He will inevitably need, if he is to throw himself into such earnest efforts night after night, some opportunity for rest during the day, and this plan will afford it. He will not be bound, of course, to follow his previous schedules slavishly, but we think he will find his sermons more adequate than if he hastily selected this theme or that in the midst of the meetings, and when tired out and unable to give them sufficient reflection. His prepared thought will doubtless have to have new life and power put into it, but the spirit of the hour and his own intensified feelings may be depended upon to supply any such need.

Many most perplexing questions gather around

the problem of ideals, means, and methods in evangelism to make it most successful, and to have it express most of the spirit of Christ. Thus a most serious inquiry, facing every preacher, relates to the kind of a message the pulpit shall present. It is difficult to answer the question whether, as compared with previous eras, church attendance, in England and America, has in reality decreased. It is admitted that fewer people attend both morning and evening services. Men are more conspicuous in their seeming neglect than women, though the latter appear attracted, in increasing numbers, toward the ornate services of ritualistic churches.

But what the Australian Christian World has to say about the attitude of church members toward the preacher is incisive. It goes to the very heart of the subject, and should awaken serious reflection. Men flippantly criticize the preaching as being too wordy, too little interesting, too far removed from the common concerns of men, not abreast of the times. The writer in the antipodes thinks that the laymen need to clear their minds of cant. Do they really and honestly expect their minister to deliver his Master's message, or do they want him to lecture on any and every kind of subject that is likely to be of popular interest? Do they say so much about "a full house" and "a big plate collection" that the preacher is constantly tempted to use short and easy methods for filling up the pews? Are not most ministers conscious, most of the time, of this pressure? We think it is so in America, however it may be in Australia. The side of the financial support of the church is pushed too prominently to the front. We expect men to crowd into our churches,

and not only this, but to pay generously for their own evangelization.

If earnest men and women in all the churches were to fix their minds on quality rather than quantity, do their utmost to support godly ministers by encouraging them to think more of fidelity to Christ and to the needs of men than of the immediate results of preaching, and determine to support the work generously themselves, we believe there would be a better condition of affairs. Perhaps the fault is with church members themselves rather than with the outside public. Out of their own soul-neglect, the dropping out of family religion, their worldly ambitions and aims, the preference for mechanical remedies over a vital piety, has come much of the popular indifference to the Church and its services. And we believe the Australian writer is right when he says: "It can be removed only by a return to greater simplicity of life, and to a more constant seeking first of the kingdom of God and his righteousness; when the Church of Christ becomes more to us, it will become more to others around us; when we devote to it our best thought and prayer and gifts, and when we live for it as Christ died for it and now lives for it, then, and not till then, can we hope to see it a real power in the state."

We are convinced that this is the fact. Unevangelized people are not such superficial amusement-lovers as we think. Underneath there is the hunger for satisfying truth. They want food and not chaff. In the long run they will respect earnest concern for their souls far more than any frantic efforts to cater to their supposed morbid craving for continual sensationalism.

The embodiment of a false and misleading theology in the appeals made to the unconverted may work an infinite amount of mischief. While salvation is free, and is offered on the condition of faith alone, we must never forget, at our peril, the wholesome words of Saint James: "Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Luther, completely enamored of Paul's theology, failed to appreciate the theology of James—its necessary complement, the other hemisphere of full-rounded Bible truth—and declared that James's Epistle was one of straw. But Paul and James do not contradict each other, and we need the emphasis that each places, the one on faith, the other on the practical evidence, in the renewed and actively good life, of a true as against a merely formal and theoretical faith. No heresy can be much worse than that of the Antinomians, who contended that, under the gospel dispensation, the obligations of the moral law were not still imposed on Christians.

The old dispute concerning faith and works reappears periodically. It was a standing matter of controversy between Toplady and Wesley. Wesley's strong, practical instincts naturally led him to appreciate to the full James's common-sense admonitions. The softened echo of some very bitter theological disputes is found in that line of Toplady's "Rock of Ages," "Nothing in my hand I bring."

To-day, we judge, there is still need of very careful definition. No doctrine or practice of "the

✓ higher life" which fails to make due account of the fundamental necessity of righteousness and beneficence, and which would unconsciously substitute an ecstasy for a morality, and an emotionalism for a service, can stand either the Christ test or the test of reason and experiment. Both the Church and the world must repudiate it as an indication of unhealthy feverishness rather than health. People need to beware of loose conceptions in religion. We sing:

"Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath died, and there is remission."

But exactly what do we mean by that? If its intent is that we are no longer under the threatenings of Sinai, unalleviated by the blessed graciousness of the Mount of Beatitudes; if it is meant that the burdensome exactions of the ceremonial law are no longer loaded upon us—then we have a right to sing, "Free from the law." But we must constantly and emphatically remind ourselves that the moral law is of eternal obligation upon us—that Jesus confirmed Moses, and even interpreted his laws with deeper and wider significance—that the gospel did not abrogate the Ten Commandments, but filled them full of a diviner scope and application. This necessary reminder will

. . . frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.

Again we sing—what has often been wrongfully interpreted to our discredit by "liberal" theologians—

"Nothing, either great or small,
Remains for me to do;
Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owe!"

As applied to the terms of salvation—as meant for the penitent—this theology is Pauline and biblical. We cannot win or buy our salvation. But as a program of life for the Christian, as defining his attitude toward duty and service, nothing could be more extravagant and false. Everything in the way of daily obligation and loving helpfulness remains for him to do.

The subject of right indoctrination in revivals needs another illustration. In a rather famous debate in a certain preachers' meeting, where the subject of evangelism was up for discussion, we once heard a most prominent clergyman say that what was wanted to-day was a return to the old-time preaching of "hell-fire and brimstone." We thought at the time, and still believe, that if that is the best thing that can be said to give light on the subject, the situation is indeed hopeless. And every preacher knew it. He was in no danger of following the advice, for he could foresee with what pitying smiles such kind of sermons would be received by any present-day audience of intelligence. He and they might cheerfully admit that such preaching was at one time effective and was powerful in turning many into the paths of life. And they might further concede that here and there may be found communities where it would still be called for, and would prove very efficient as an instrument of conversion. But in the majority of our churches thought and conviction have moved so far away from such presentations that to attempt to revive them would be simply to invite ridicule. It is a situation, and not a theory, that we face; and if anyone thinks that this existing condition of the public mind must be per-

sistently attacked and shown to be erroneous, we simply believe that he will have his labor for his pains. The world of religious thinking cannot be rolled back a century by any such sermonie crow-bars.

What, then, has happened? Have Christians and unconverted people alike repudiated the solemn and awful language of Jesus when he warns of the doom of the incorrigible and finally impenitent? No; but they have gone beneath the surface of his words. They have insisted on interpreting them in terms of the spirit. They have found their deep and abiding moral import. They contend that these tremendous ethical and spiritual significances for the soul are the very truths which Jesus intended to convey by his startling figures of speech, and that his hearers did not misapprehend him. He spoke in metaphors, as an Oriental to Orientals, and the underlying truth, missed by a cold, matter-of-fact Western intellect that literalizes everything, was clearly understood by them. This age feels that it is not getting away from the truth of Christ, but much nearer to it, when it tries to translate these images of fire and torture into rational conceptions of the terrible damage wrought by sin in the soul, and the certain retributions which, as a consequence of wrongdoing—put into the nature of things by God, and therefore divine—will certainly follow iniquity here and hereafter.

And of this kind of preaching, in this somewhat easy-going age, it is our conviction that we need very much more. If the appalling results of an evil life on character for time and eternity are lovingly and faithfully presented, we believe that the

preacher will be listened to with respect and reverence, and that there will be an awakening of many consciences which are slumbering in a false sense of security because a flaming hell of fire and brimstone is put aside as a myth, while the very Day of Judgment is not only coming, but is already upon them.

John Wesley, in his day, stirred men's souls profoundly by earnestly exhorting them to "flee from the wrath to come." Such pleading is as much in place now as then. But, in view of our modern conception of the present and immediate retributive consequences of sin, incurred instantaneously with the sin itself, and running too into the future, is it not well to warn men to flee from the wrath that now is, from the penalties visited instantly upon all sin and not postponed for any time to come? Should not both conceptions, both great truths—after all but one truth, for future penalty is only a part of the present penalty continuous through time into eternity—be presented faithfully and solemnly by all preachers everywhere?

Pastors who resort to questionable methods of drawing a crowd to a "revival," or who employ "religious recitationists" (such a placard was recently displayed in New York), might well reconsider their plans when paragraph-writers in the secular papers note the incongruity and criticize the profanations. To put up boys to spout offhand on religion is a performance about as offensive to good taste and a right religious sentiment as the poorest of "Midway" shows. It smacks of the dime vaudeville. Mature men of thought would not consent to such a test. What can be expected

of an immature boy who is asked to speak extemporaneously on a subject given him by the audience? Nothing else than a volubility without sense or significance, a mechanical operation of the mouth in which the brain takes no part. If such abnormal youngsters, exploited for gain by their "managers," ever had any piety, they would be sure to lose it by being publicly put up before curious crowds as "infant phenoms." Religion is too sensitive a plant to stand any such handling as that. In the name of the Society for the Protection of Children, as well as in the name of propriety and decency, these exhibitions ought to be discontinued. If we are reduced as low as that in order to have a revival, for our part we care little to see one arranged for. It would be better not to try at all than to try in ways which must deeply offend the religious instincts of all normally constituted Christians. The secular press, as we have stated, sees plainly the execrable judgment involved in the whole proceeding. One such editor says: "Sensationalism in religion is always distasteful to thoughtful men and women. For this reason the 'boy preachers' and 'infant prodigies' of the pulpit seldom appeal to conservative minds. The desire to be amused as well as enlightened is so common among the masses that it offers justification to some for effervescence in the pulpit. At a great religious meeting at Ocean Grove, recently, a boy preacher from Manchester, England, announced as 'Jack Cook,' was scheduled to speak, and the vast congregation was invited to choose a text from which he might expound. The text was given, and he spoke extemporaneously, it is said, for three-

quarters of an hour to a 'bewildered audience.' The utterances of the pulpit should always be thoughtful and well considered. The profound truths of the gospel should have behind their exposition the weight of years and the strength of deep thought and consecrated study. Sensational utterances may sway an impulsive and eager crowd, but the best mission of the Church is to reach those clear-minded, conscientious, and earnest seekers after truth who are asking for a perfect demonstration of its abiding place."

A speaker at a convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs of America told about a certain minister in Chicago who used a brass band to increase the attendance at his church. He got the people into the church, but when he began to speak they stampeded, he said, and broke for the door. The speaker observed: "The trouble was that as a preacher he failed to make good; he could not deliver the goods he had advertised. A good band and a poor preacher may attract a crowd, but they cannot hold it if the preacher insists on taking a place on the program." This remark is very suggestive. It is possible, by means of glaring placards and newspaper notices, to beguile an audience to church to listen to some sensationally phrased topic; but if the people get nothing when they come, they are not liable to be taken in by such chaff very frequently. Good preaching is its own best advertisement.

Occasionally we meet, in organs of liberal churches, semi-jocose references to certain churches where the attendance has fallen off, the collections or pew rents decreased, and whose officials, con-

sequently, are moved to say, "Go to now, let us get up a revival." It would certainly be bad enough if any church were actuated by merely prudential considerations, affecting the popularity or the support of the church, in beginning evangelistic services. This is a world of wonderfully mixed motives, and sometimes the unadulterated quality of their motives is scarcely known even by good men. We will not say, therefore, that there never has been a church which started revivalistic services simply for the sake of the crowd and the "baskets." But we will say that we have never known of such an instance where we even were compelled strongly to suspect it. We think the suspicion of it in others is the result of poetic imagination; but, all the same, we are thankful for the implied warning, for such a revival in an evangelical church would be even worse than no revivals at all in the non-evangelical churches.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PERSONAL ELEMENT IN EVANGELISM

A PERENNIAL subject of debate in the churches is that of the advisability of the employment of evangelists for special services. We are glad to bear testimony to the consecration, invaluable aid, and large success of the great majority of these devoted men. What we write below applies only to the exceptional few whose influence we regret.

In his entertaining volume on "New France and New England" John Fiske tells of a certain evangelist who preached during the "Great Awakening" in the middle of the eighteenth century in New England. His name was James Davenport, and "his ill-balanced enthusiasm led him to very strange lengths. . . . He was constitutionally intemperate in speech, eccentric in action, and inspired by that peculiar self-conceit which is one of the marks of mental derangement. If he came to a town where little excitement was manifested on the subject of religion, he would revile the ministers of the town, accusing them of being unconverted, blind leaders of the blind, and he warned the people that by listening to such preaching they were imperiling their souls. At Boston he grew so abusive that the ministers held a conference and decided that they would not allow him the use of their pulpits. Nothing daunted, however, this Boanerges hurled forth his thunderbolts on such places as Copp's Hill and Boston Common, where he spoke his mind with great

freedom to thousands of listeners. For example, in one of his prayers, he said, 'Good Lord, I will not mince matters with thee, for thou knowest that I know that most of the ministers of Boston and of the country are unconverted, and are leading their people blindfold to hell.' For these words Davenport was indicted for slander, but was acquitted on the ground of insanity."

It may be that there was some truth in his defamatory remarks, but we can hardly believe that, even in a time of religious decadence, things were quite as bad as to call for such violent and wholesale denunciation. Whatever should have been said, ought to have been said in different spirit and words. Davenport may not have had many successors, but we have had experience with one or two men, at least, of his make-up and methods. And, on one occasion, we were present in a ministers' meeting when such a ranter was brought before it, and asked to prove his specifications as to the charge of laziness and indifference to revivals, which he had been rather recklessly making against the preachers of the city in public addresses. His "explanations" were not very explanatory and he was in a rather awkward situation. It may be that ministers frequently need stirring up; they must have exhortation to zeal just as other people. But it takes the right kind of man to do it, and it must be done in a way that will effect its desired end, and not provoke to excusable wrath by exaggeration, uncharitableness, and libelous representation.

There are those whose contention as to ideals and methods is that we must resuscitate, with more energy than ever, the old methods from which we

have measurably departed, and pour fresh life into them. Through these methods, they say, the great victories of the past were won, and there is no valid reason for thinking that they would not be as effective now as formerly.

Others assert that there must be a new departure; that the old methods of "revival work" and forms of appeal are outworn and ineffective; that there must be new ways of presenting the gospel truth to men—new tactics in spiritual warfare. Yet while the method may be new, it will still be only an improved plan, adapted to the present age, of presenting and urging the unchangeable truth of Christ. As a recent writer puts it: "The new evangelism will not be narrowed to a mere moral reformation, nor confined within the bounds of any human system of theology. It will not bring a new gospel, because it cannot have a new Christ. Jesus and his glad tidings of blood atonement will be the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. We need a new evangelism; but to be effective it must be new only in the sense of being drawn fresh from the fountain-head. We need a new day, but not a new sun; a new evangelism, but not a new evangel."

We suspect there is truth in both these positions, and that, whatever new methods may be evolved in the future, they will perpetuate in themselves the best features of the old. Some are saying that we need to cultivate more zeal, and there can be little doubt of that. Others warn us that this is preëminently a reflective and inquiring age, testing everything by rational processes, and our zeal must be kept from becoming a barren enthusiasm by having large admixtures of sober, solid, careful

teaching and explanation. There can be no denying that. We cannot with impunity forget and ignore the fact that we are living in a scientific era, and that the last fifty years or more have formed an intellectual habit which must surely be reckoned with in our evangelistic efforts. They are right who tell us that emotion is indispensable in revivals. A frigid, coldly reasoned-out spiritual process could not escape formality and deadness. The feelings must have their legitimate place and function and cannot be repressed without mutilation of the best in men. But, particularly in our day, reason and conscience must receive equal honor and attention with the feelings in seeking to win men.

We are assured by some that the day of the specific and periodical revival has past, and that we must depend in the future upon the quiet, regular, constant, and progressive methods of Christian culture. Again we suspect that neither method will exclude the other, and that each will give good account of its respective excellence. After an undue or too exclusive dependence upon the periodical revival for the ingathering of converts, it is, doubtless, well that specific investigation is now being concentrated upon the cultural method. Its special and peculiar adaptation to children and youth is being clearly recognized, and there are many others, adults, of calm, thoughtful, and fine temperaments and moral dispositions, for whom it is preëminently indicated.

More and more the fundamental and evident fact is being acted upon—that all men are not of one temperament, and that different methods must be suited to the emotional, scholastic, and practical

types of humanity: to women, to collegians, to matter-of-fact business men, and many others. The studies of Christian psychologists along this line are proving very suggestive and serviceable. People of culture and true refinement draw back, wounded and insulted, when the sacredest precincts of their personality are thus rudely invaded. For some strong and brawny personality to seek to overrule and dominate some delicate, retiring lady or gentleman, in a matter as internal and holy as the life of the spirit, is as reprehensible as it is unwarrantable. Hearts are not to be worn on the sleeve for daws to peck at. When it is claimed that methods which lay themselves open to obvious objection and criticism have been instrumental in saving souls, the pertinent inquiry still remains, "How many other souls of rarer mold have they repulsed and alienated?" The methods must surely carry the responsibility of the latter as well as the credit of the former.

Innumerable sudden conversions in the past make it unnecessary to speak a single word in defense of the possibility of immediate and instant conversions. For many temperaments this is the natural operation, and yet it probably is the case that in many instances, though not evidently in all, there was an anterior process of reflection and preparation. The conversion was a culmination. Besides, the presence of God in the general courses of life must not be denied. God is in all existence. He can be found in the trivial round as well as in the crisis—in ordinary and gradual as well as in extraordinary and sudden ways; and sudden regenerations must still make their moral connections with everyday living

—relate themselves with the practical and usual trend. Otherwise the revival, and with it religion, comes under suspicion of being artificial and, so, questionable. Thoughtful people will have a feeling that it has been “worked up”; that it savors more of the artifices of men than of the stirrings of the Divine Spirit. Let the Church cultivate both forms of revival work—the periodical “special effort,” fervent, with an intensity which is still rational, and the method by continuous culture which shall escape the possible danger of becoming merely formal and intellectual by constantly seeking a right spiritual ardor. But particularly in regard to the religious training of children may the culture method be found most successful. A very intelligent gentleman, the superintendent of schools in his city, recently expressed to us a desire that we think others besides himself may have felt. He thinks there ought to be a closer coöperation between pastors, Sunday school teachers, and parents in a systematic training of children religiously for future church membership. He holds that there ought to be manuals prepared that could be put into the hands of such parents as are willing to work together with others for the good of their children’s souls, giving them specific directions particularly as to how to impart instruction from the Bible. We regard the suggestion as an excellent one, and wish we might see such handbooks. Many parents are willing to do more than is being done for the religious culture of the children in the home, but they feel something of an incapacity—they do not know how to go about it. Why should they have books telling them how to cook, and not books showing them

how to train immortal minds for character? Many young ministers are doing splendid work in this field of child-training. Older pastors who feel that they can preach to adults but cannot teach children through a progressive course, owing to a lack of instinct for the work and a want of pedagogical training, ought, even late in life, to try to make good the deficiency and redeem the past mistake and neglect.

No movement of our modern times bears more promise in it than the widespread interest in the moral and spiritual training and education of childhood. It means incalculably much for the boys and girls themselves, and also for the home, society, the Church, the nation, and the world. The Christianity of the future is to be made more efficient and glorious because of such a reasonable and obligatory program of Christian work. It is incomprehensible that the thought of the Church should have come so tardily to the apprehension of this most obvious truth: that the best way of getting people committed to the Christian life and actively interested in church activities; the best way of saving them from vice, indifference to religion, demoralized characters, and of turning them into paths of morality, religion, and righteous conduct, is to begin effort with them in their earliest youth.

Because, for so long a period, the eyes of Christians were so strangely closed to this outstanding truth, and because of the consequent comparative neglect of child-life, irreparable harm has resulted. Thousands have lived and died, without any experience of religion whatever, who might have been eminent Christians, exerting a saving influence on

society. In countless cases, too, these neglected ones have drifted into open immoralities, and have proved a curse to themselves and to the world when they might have been a blessing.

But in this day the folly and sinfulness of the former carelessness and neglectfulness of the growing generation is quite universally recognized, and the churches are endeavoring to atone for their grievous sins of omission. There is a general rallying cry of "The Church for the children and the children for the Church." It is as Dr. Rishell, in his thought-provoking volume, "The Child as God's Child," says in his concluding paragraph: "So to train a human being from infancy to maturity as that he will never fall into the evils of an unbridled appetite; that he will lead a clean, pure, helpful life; that he will find in the service of God and the service of his fellow man his chief joy; that he will gladly take his place by the side of Christ in the saving of other human beings—this is worth while."

Emphasis too is being laid upon the duty of parents in the proper advice and guidance of their children, and pulpit and press are urging the absolute necessity of the conscientious discharge of parental responsibilities, too often willfully shirked or negligently allowed to go by default. The consequence of such weakness is deplorable. One preacher puts the situation in words none too plain: "It is our awful shame that children grow up to do as they please, when it is our plain duty to *command* them to keep the way of the Lord. They may tread on our toes now, but ere long they will trample on our hearts. It is sad to see hosts of

children growing up for the barest treadmill of existence, to hang like a millstone upon the community, or for the penitentiary or the death-chair, all because parents do not do their duty. Has it ever occurred to you that many a father hangs his own son because he does not keep him off the gal-lows?"

Another authority, Ennis Richmond, in "The Mind of a Child," writes: "If every child were taught to be temperate, drunkenness and gluttony would cease; if every child were taught to be reverent, blasphemy would cease; if every child were taught to be self-controlled, evil passions of all kinds would be held in check. . . . There is no shirking it; as we train our children, so are we responsible for the welfare of the world of the future; we cannot leave them alone, they cannot stand still, they must go backward or forward, and on us, on us alone, depends the result."

And not only in the matter of moral training are the parents being exhorted to greater faithfulness, but also in that of a definite guidance of their children into a religious confession and life. If the children of Christians are not Christians, there is generally a serious fault somewhere. It may be contended, truthfully enough, that, even after all patient endeavor on the part of fathers and mothers, the young people will sometimes persistently refuse to take upon themselves the yoke of Christ. Nevertheless, these are the exceptions, and the parents cannot accuse themselves—they have delivered their own souls. Dr. A. H. McKinney, superintendent of the New York State Sunday School Association, and author of "The Child for Christ,"

pertinently argues the case with the parent in such pointed questionings as these: "The adult needs Christ, to be sure. Does not the child? You wish your child to be good. Who can give him such help to be good as Christ can? You wish your child to keep out of temptation. Who can deliver him as Christ can? You wish your child to grow in the spiritual life. Who can help him in this growth as Christ can? What is it that Christ does for the adult who looks to him in faith? That and more Christ can and will do for the believing child?"

The children ought to be coming in larger numbers out of our Sunday schools into our church membership. There is a vast improvement in this regard over what has obtained in the past, but we are still a long distance from the ideal. Decision Day is an excellent idea that has borne good fruit. Wisely, patiently, tactfully, lovingly, prayerfully, there should be coöperation between the parents, the pastor, the superintendent, and the Sunday school teacher to lead the boys and girls to commit themselves intelligently and decisively to the Christian life, and to enroll themselves as members of Christ's working Church on earth. Dr. C. V. Anthony, author of "The Children's Covenant," remarks significantly: "The way from the Sunday school to the Church should be well traveled. We often hear the Sunday school spoken of as the nursery of the Church. If such it is, the replanting should take place as early as safety will admit. The Sunday school is a part of the Church, and under the supervision of the Church it is intended to build up the Church. If parents send their children to the Sunday school, they ought to understand that, as a

natural consequence, the children will be gathered into the Church."

What kind of Christians may we expect when such a policy becomes universally operative in our churches? Will we not see a stronger, more intelligent, less inconsistent membership than the world has ever seen? Dr. Francis E. Clark, founder of the Christian Endeavor Society, has voiced the convictions of thousands upon the need of gathering the lads and lasses of our Sunday schools into the fold of the church membership. He says: "Here among the children and youth is the choicest garden spot in all the Lord's domain. Why spend all the time in reclaiming the desert when the soil of youth will yield thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold? Shall we spend all our time digging in the scorix of the burnt-out emotions of the aged or the middle aged, and forget the virgin gold mine of youthful love and enthusiasm which will so richly reward our love? It is possible and natural for children to be converted at their mother's knee, and never know the time when they did not love the Saviour. And this should not be something rare, occasional, remarkable; a phenomenon, a thing to excite remark, like a comet or a meteor. It should be the usual, expected thing that children of religious parents should choose to live for the Saviour as early as they are able to make any choice, and should be received into the Church and receive its nurturing, fostering care."

Frequently pastors and adult members of the Church do not realize the necessity of very plain and simple explanations to the boy or girl entering the Christian life. We have known those, in the

past, who had been powerfully impressed in an old-fashioned revival where feeling was intense. Their emotions were wonderfully wrought upon, and for a time they lived in an exalted mood. But they could not stay forever thus on the Mount of Ecstasy, and the reaction was inevitable. When the reaction came, for lack of some definite and kindly instruction as to just what was involved for them in living a Christian life, they were swept backward into a condition of unimpressible indifference and skepticism. They imagined their eyes had been opened at last, and that they now saw that religion was only a thing of fervor, excitement, and overstrung nerves. From this cynical position some did not come for years.

But, if some sensible, pious, practical person could have had a quiet talk with them, explaining the Christian duties of trust, Scripture reading, prayer, and church attendance, and the obligations in home and school life of obedience, courtesy, honesty, truthfulness, honor, purity, nobility, chivalry, love; if some one could only have told them what it was to be a Christian, in regard to the simplicity which is in Christ, and the everyday moral obligations, they would have been saved a painful experience which gave life a wrench in an unnecessary fall from grace.

The Rev. Dr. H. M. Curtis has told how he led a class of boys and girls through a course of familiar talks on "What Is It to Be a Christian?" The membership of the class was purely voluntary. At first there was some reticence, but, after a little, the most delightful companionship and confidence on the part of the young people who brought all sorts

of questions for his solution. There was no undue pressure to induce them to join the Church. Nevertheless, many came to ask the privilege.

Dr. Curtis prepared some ten different printed leaflets, with about fifteen questions on each, for the guidance of the thought of these youthful inquirers. One paper would relate to temptation, sin, and punishment; another to Christ, forgiveness, sustaining grace, atonement, salvation; another to confessing Christ; another to growth in the Christian life; another to the life of Christian service; another to faith and prayer; another to church membership; and another to the sacraments. All of our churches have lost immensely for lack of just such plain, systematic instruction. The questions in these pamphlets, it seems to us, were most simply and yet most significantly framed, and covered the great essentials of biblical teaching and Christian practice. We commend them as models for all pastors. Here are two sample series of questions on "About Being a Christian" and "About a Life of Service":

"What is a Christian? Where were the disciples first called Christians? Why ought we to be Christians? What is the first step in becoming a Christian? What is the next thing to do? What must we give up in order to become a Christian? If we are Christians and fall into sin, what should we do? Is the Christian life a happy or a sorrowful one? Do we become Christians at once or as the result of growth? How may we grow in the Christian life? How can people know that we are Christians? When is the best time to begin to be a Christian? What did Christ say about the children

coming to him? When does the Bible say we ought to become Christians?"

"What kind of a life did Jesus live? What kind of a life would Jesus have us live? What will be the result if we live such a life? Who did Christ say was the greatest among the disciples? What are some of the ways in which we can help others? How will kind words help others? What is the best message to take to the sick and suffering? Why should we give help to the poor and the needy? What did Jesus say about the blessedness of giving? What should we give to the poor and needy besides money? What great command did Christ give to all his disciples? What, then, should we do when we become Christians? What is a missionary? How can we all be missionaries? What will be the final reward of those who live such a life of service and helping others to know the way of salvation?"

There are many strenuous advocates for "institutional" features in connection with evangelism. For several years Dr. Rainsford, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, conducted evangelistic services on the old lines among the masses of New York city; but he was led to abandon them as being unfruitful of permanent results, and to rely upon a combination of evangelism and the institutional plans of clubs for boys and girls, athletics, baths, mutual improvement societies, savings banks, mothers' meetings, and every other suggestion of the sort. The possible developments along this line for self-help, social and intellectual culture, recreation and health, better homes and better finances, and the general brightening and heightening of life,

are practically unlimited. If dependence be placed entirely on these "institutions" the religious element will be in danger of elimination. But, if the whole program be vitalized by an earnest evangelical spirit, we believe it to be the most successful plan that can be adopted in conditions similar to his. It was the method of Jesus, who not only preached but healed; who forgave the palsied man his sins and then cured his poor, stricken body. It was the plan of John Wesley, who united philanthropic efforts in behalf of orphans and working people with all of his revival propaganda. Dr. Rainsford also found that work for and among the children yielded the largest lasting returns for his labor and expenditures.

Is it wisdom in the Church leaders to fix a mark—say of two million or five million to be converted—in beginning any evangelistic enterprise? We believe that the Church ought to work constantly for the largest possible ingathering of souls. But who shall fix numbers and establish limits? It is the Lord who giveth the increase. If a small number is named, he may rebuke our unfaith by far exceeding it in the victories of his Spirit over human hearts. If a vast number is named—far beyond any probability, humanly speaking—there is hopelessness and paralysis from the first on the part of his human instruments, and disappointment, reaction, and a temptation to inactivity follow failure. Nothing indeed is impossible with the Lord, and it is within the operation of his grace that we should, at any time, be astounded by the sudden and overpowering outpouring of his Spirit, and that nations

should be born in a day, men being converted by the hundreds of thousands. But such a result will not be accomplished by our mechanical putting down one, or a dozen, or a score of millions for conversion as the measure of our expectations, the top notch of our prayers.

Among our fathers in the ministry there was a phrase current to which we have alluded—"drawing the net"—which referred to an invitation to the unconverted, after the sermon, to accept Christ. Formerly such an exhortation was an invariable rule with the minister. He had it in mind during his sermon and worked up to it as his climax. When he cast his net and drew it in he was grievously disappointed if there were no fish inclosed. Many an old saint to-day is unable to understand why his pastor should preach so earnestly and convincingly, employing argument and pathos alike to show the reasonableness and necessity of the religious life, and then close the service and dismiss the worshipers without giving anyone a chance to act in answer to the appeal. Preachers should awake to the incongruity and absurdity of the practice of presenting impassioned truths and then giving no opportunity for any to take advantage of their aroused emotions and pledge themselves at the altar.

It is true that not every sermon will be specifically what is called "evangelistic." Nevertheless, if it deal with some fundamental Christian truth which men ought to practice in their lives, or some aspect of faith and experience, the invitation will not come out of place. In fact, whatever the sermon—be it

even on some reform, or philanthropy, or phase of practical morality—a warm plea before the last hymn for men to “come forward,” to forsake sin and worldliness and adhere to Christ, is always in order on the Sabbath day or any other day. The very fact that he is to make his appeal at the close will operate on the preacher’s mind, both in the preparation and the delivery of his sermon, to keep him near to the truth of Christ and give warmth to his feelings. He will be apt, too, to choose themes and texts with practical results in mind. There must be a caution lest the form of invitation lapse into a dry and dull formality. We do not say that the net ought always, in all circumstances, to be cast. In small congregations the pastor may know that every person before him is attached to the Church. But ministers who have adopted the practice of letting no service go by without “opening the doors of the Church” have been surprised at the outcome. There have often been responses where they were least expected, and a church so growing is strengthened continuously and lastingly.

The ideals and activities of the Federation of the Churches of Christ in America, expressed through its Council, are making known the growing spirit of fraternity and coöperation among the churches. We know of no higher purpose that federation could propose than a united effort of all the evangelical churches in our great cities, looking toward a general revival of religion. Unity in aim and spirit was included, without doubt, in Christ’s prayer “That they all may be one.” Therefore any move-

ment that is exhibitivè of this spirit, and emphasizes it in the world's sight, ought to be welcomed. It must come as a tidal wave out of the great deep of God's spiritual workings, and not as a storm wave on the surface. The work of evangelizing a great city is so great that it will require combined efforts to make any deep impression. No one denomination is equal to the task and it is a work that belongs to all. If there are other ways of reaching people with the gospel than those commonly used, they should be employed. Great municipalities like New York and Chicago are such battlefields for the essentials of Christianity that the evangelical preacher forgets to fight for denominational shibboleths and "just preaches the gospel."

So much is said in these days to the effect that Christian unity will not be brought about by way of agreement on any particular doctrinal basis, or by way of the adoption of a uniform mode of worship, that sincere believers must look to some such plan as is proposed in order to promote, or at least express, the unity of the evangelical denominations. Combinations are everywhere in evidence in trade, manufactures, and finance. The seeming divisions of Christianity are all the more incongruous and unpardonable. They are out of joint with the age. They are only apparent and superficial. By a united effort for evangelism the Christian forces would be more firmly fused and welded together. It is felt that there must be a religious reckoning and a reawakening, a readjustment of methods and a new departure in the line of full coöperation. In this way every household might be reached with

the gospel message, and civic conditions would be immensely changed for the better.

Various special plans of revival effort may also be mentioned and commended, plans which have been in practice most effective. One of the most reasonable of religious instincts is the spontaneous movement, in expectation and prayer for a revival, on the part of pastor and people, whenever a new church is completed. This is the note we oftenest hear sounded on dedication days. It is intuitively felt that the most appropriate object of endeavor, on entering the new temple, is the supplementing of the formal and ceremonial dedication of the church by a dedication through the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the people. Everything is auspicious for such a spiritual visitation: the joy and gratitude of the congregation over the sacred edifice, completed after much self-sacrifice; the rising tide of emotion which the dedication day has brought; the natural concentration of the thought of the community to the God and the Christ for whose worship the new and fair church building has been erected, and of whom it now stands as a fresh reminder; the conviction of the necessity of a renewed and larger accession of the Spirit as befits a religion whose adoration and service of God must be in spirit and in truth.

Another effort which has been, in many places, singularly blessed, is to secure the places of amusement, which so many of the unevangelized frequent and where they feel so much at home, for revival services. In most towns, fortunately, the theaters

are closed on Sunday. Where they are open the possibility of employing them on Sunday for higher purposes than the vaudeville or drama is something that deserves serious consideration by Christian people. Large numbers of alienated and unchurched men and women, at home in the theater, might be brought under gospel influences there who cannot now be induced to attend services at the churches. If the Christian people could rent these auditoriums on the Sabbath for evangelistic meetings, we believe excellent results might be achieved. The cost might be considerable, but the "cash basis" is the very lowest and unworthy of followers of Him who came to seek and save the lost.

Over in England they believe that the theater service, as conducted there by some of our Wesleyan brethren, "pays." Here is a sample testimony of one who was reclaimed in such meetings: "I thank God that I ever came into this theater. I was a drunkard and a gambler. One Sunday I did a thing that I had never done before—took the money from my wife's pocket and came out of the house to drink. I stayed in the 'pubs' till they closed at half-past two; then, as I strolled up the street, I noticed the doors of this theater open, and, neither knowing nor caring what was on, I came in. It was a lantern service. One slide on the sheet—a picture of a gambling scene—made me think of my life as I had never thought before; another reminded me of the children at home I was neglecting through my love of drink; and when the prayer meeting came I needed no pressing to stay. That afternoon I gave my heart to God. There was a complete change in our home, and no mistake! Why, the

neighbors were actually asking what fresh people had moved into our house. But there were no fresh people; it was the religion of Jesus Christ that had made all the difference. Now my Saviour keeps me every day."

And here is another: "Eh, lads; I was a bad 'un. I feel ashamed to tell of my past life, it was so black; but, O, how wonderful the grace of God is to save a poor sinner like me. My wife's been a Christian for years, and she's prayed for me, too; but it seemed as if the drink had got too firm hold of me. Well, one Sunday—and it was a happy day for me—I came into this theater. The subject that night was 'The Better Land,' and since that time this world has been a better land to me, for I took Jesus to be my Saviour, and now I am so happy I feel like singing all the time."

It is not much to be wondered at that Mr. Alan Ford, a worker in these meetings, convincingly asks: "Does it pay? To attract to a religious service week after week hundreds of men and women who could not be persuaded to enter a chapel or church under any circumstances? To have the opportunity of preaching the gospel to 'the bottom lot' in the place where they feel most at home? To wrest for the moment from the enemy one of his outposts and attack him with his own guns? To do anything in any way, at any time, when such action results in the cry of the repentant sinner, 'What must I do to be saved?' and the highest joy the Christian worker can know—that of pointing others to Christ?"

Still another effective method, where the pastor is conducting his own meetings, is the employment

of a "singing evangelist." Usually there can be little objection to the employment of such a helper to assist the pastor, and so give some degree of novelty that might be legitimate in attracting the people. The employment of such a man would ordinarily seem justifiable and advisable, provided he did not more than occasionally want to preach himself, and provided he did not have some trivial collection of sentimental songs to sing, and a book to sell, on which he was reaping big profits. Selling song books and photographs in the house of the Lord may not be quite so bad as the offense which called for the whip of cords that Jesus wielded so effectually, but it is a breach of sacred etiquette that ought to be sternly discouraged. And the noblest penitential hymns of the Church, combined with the best of the gospel hymns which have borne the test of time, ought to be used in place of the gushing, ephemeral sort. Curious reflections come to one who attempts to join in the singing at our present-day evangelistic services in church or on camp ground. Ordinarily some rather new book of lately published songs is used. We need not take time here to say what has been said a hundred times as to the quality of the compositions in sentiment, words, or musical setting. Perhaps the strictures have, at times, been too severe, but, in general, they have been deserved. When, for preaching services, any selection of hymns appropriate to the subject is desired, it simply cannot be made. Sometimes there are not a half-dozen well-known hymns in these collections. The choir can sing the newest ditties, and most of the young people; but those in middle life, or beyond, sometimes constituting the

bulk of the audience, do not know the music, and it spoils the service for them to have it converted into a singing school. So they sit in enforced silence, despite the leader's enthusiastic and repeated exhortation, "Now, let everybody sing!" How gladly would they comply, and what a volume of song would fill church or auditorium if they were only given a chance to use the old songs—lofty in sentiment and set to noble strains—with which they are familiar, and which are so endeared to them! It seems pathetically sad to us to deprive these mature Christians of the opportunity, for which they long, of expressing themselves in song. Surely there are enough of moving and stirring hymns in our old collection to suit any modern evangelistic service.

The period after the revival is a somewhat severe testing place for the members of the church. Lamentable, indeed, would it be if, succumbing to any feeling of reaction, church members should, after all the zeal of an evangelistic campaign, be lax and let go what they have gained. Some members who have been cold and indifferent have been aroused and stimulated, and they must find their places regularly in all religious meetings, and take some part in them. Some found great blessing in calling from house to house, and this work ought not to be done simply once a year, or in a period of years. Some were helped by speaking to others concerning their religious condition and hopes, and this practice will be of quite as much importance thereafter.

This period is a critical one for those converted. The converts in the meeting ought to show their

earnestness and the sincerity of their vows by uniting immediately with the Church, and taking some part in the Christian work. The public profession of the vows of a Christian will increase their spiritual interest and confirm and strengthen all they have thus far done and experienced. In the Church they will find that society and fellowship by which they will be sustained and encouraged. There they will discover what have been rightly termed "the means of grace"—the public Sabbath services, the prayer meeting and class meeting. There they will find various societies organized for Christian work, and they can employ their activities in them. There they will find the Christian ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The necessary next step after a confession of Christ is to unite with the Church of which he is the Head, and in which his Spirit abides; where his sacraments are and where the gospel is preached according to his ordaining. If one says he can live as good a Christian life outside as inside the Church, let him reflect that, if everyone had taken that position, no Church whatever would have been possible, and without the organization for the spread of truth, no Christianity to-day would be in existence. It is the one grand means for extending the knowledge of Christ and salvation, and anyone who truly loves Christ will love the Church he has instituted and set in the world to do his work and to publish his gospel. It is the duty of every Christian to help forward the evangelization of the world, and every good, philanthropic cause that goes hand in hand with the gospel. These agencies are found almost exclusively within the Christian Church,

and no one can find any better society, any better channels or method for his religious and benevolent impulses and activities, than there.

If one stays outside the fold of which Christ is the Shepherd, and refuses to commit himself publicly in allegiance to his name, it will not be long before the world, which has not been definitely and absolutely forsaken, will absorb again his feeble spirituality and he will be as before his awakening. This is not written from theory. Every pastor knows that those who can be, with some assurance, counted as sincere Christians who will endure, are those who consecrate themselves at the altars of the Church. After a little while the others are not to be found, and the interest which once possessed them has completely died out. Every young convert should receive the friendly warning not to make the dangerous experiment of trying to live a Christian life outside of Christ's Church, but to go forward and finish what he has begun—dedicate himself to Christ's work in company with his followers, and continue faithfully in that helpful communion till called to membership in the Church Triumphant of the glorified.

Owing to laxity in interest and method many churches fail to hold permanently the converts made in their revival services. A year or two after the great revival in Wales there was a reported decrease in the Welsh churches of ten thousand members. It may be that the statistics are a little unreliable, as most things of that sort are. It is doubtless true that increases and decreases are but words in arithmetic, and that Jesus Christ is never impoverished by the results of a census, and that

the assets of his kingdom are no smaller because numbers have gone down.

Nevertheless, the situation calls for some careful reflection. The Welsh revival was a wonderfully sweet and pure religious movement, largely among the laity, and without much effort on the part of the preachers. Men were carried away with high and holy emotions and reprobates yielded to hallowed impulses. But was there sufficient patient instruction given these converts? Did anybody tell them whither they were being carried? Was there enough insistence on the cost of the new life? No church would have been equal to retaining such a crowd, including children and rude and elemental men and women, with the thousands of entanglements presented without. The joy of the new converts was great, but the responsibility of the Church was greater still. The opportunity and testing of a church comes, not *in* the revival but *after* the revival. What the power of the Church really is, what gift of domination and conquest has been won by it, is shown when "the tumult and the shouting dies." The question before all the churches is not whether they can get a revival, but what they are able to do with it when they have got it. God may reveal to churches, praying for an outpouring, their pathetic lack, since their desires are so much vaster than their vitality. There must be grip enough to hold what is won—to teach and inspire the crowd that comes in the heat of devotion. The Church itself must go to the penitent bench and live there before it can expect to see much fruit of others going there. In Wales the conditions of life which surrounded the converts made it very difficult for

many to endure. The public house pulled as never before because men had money in their pockets as they never before had. The debasing recreations and the temptations of the world and politics added their seductions. The new age certainly demands a new evangelism and the new evangelism involves a vast preparatory toil.

Interest in men must be permanent and not spasmodic. We once heard of a young man, coming into one of our cities, who complained that a certain minister gave him no rest or peace until he had "deposited his letter." He called on him repeatedly and showed him the greatest attention. But, after he had presented his letter and joined the local church, he suddenly "dropped him," and seemed to lose all interest in him. We can well conceive how this might occur. The pastor might be absorbed, not, as some cynics might allege, in increasing his membership roll simply to spread his sounding name abroad; he might be, and most probably was, taken up with a pure desire to get people who had letters in their possession safe into the fold before they had got entangled in the allurements of city life and been drawn away from former allegiance. But once having accomplished this, he was out after fresh game. He took it for granted that he had done all he could, for a time, for the brother now "brought in," and that he must expend his efforts in doing the same things for others, leaving the church members to make a warm social atmosphere for the new recruit.

One can see how this might naturally and innocently occur with no intentional neglect in mind; the loss of interest is more apparent than real. The pastor is happy that the brother is now in the flock.

He has not forgotten him, but he thinks of the "one" more than of the "ninety and nine." Nevertheless, can we not see some real basis for the somewhat pardonable feeling of grievance on the part of our young man? The pastor ought to have shown more decidedly and continuously the concern and friendliness which he doubtless felt for him.

Sometimes this happens in the case of converts, for whom the pastor has labored and prayed incessantly; after once they have been admitted to membership his interest in them seems to die out and he acts as if that were the end of the matter. That is the wise and praiseworthy pastor who gathers the converts into classes for definite advice and prayer, who instructs them in their duties as Christians, who meets with them weekly, and gets to know them familiarly. It is not to be wondered at that, with such pastors, there is little or no falling away. And it may well be believed that such candidates make the most intelligent, faithful, and devout members of the Church. Is it a very surprising thing that so large a percentage of converts "drift" when they are allowed to go their own sweet way, with little pastoral oversight or care?

* * * * *

But it is time to bring our volume to a close. The author has endeavored to dwell upon matters essentially spiritual and inward, but also to be thoroughly practical and helpful. If he has stimulated and sustained hope for the reclamation of the most far-gone of sinful men and women; if, in any measure, he has succeeded in impressing the urgent necessity of a fuller and deeper work of grace in the Church as a body and in its members individually; if he

has been able to suggest any plans and methods whereby more conversions may result; if to ministers and laymen alike he has been instrumental in inspiring a stronger confidence in the operation of the Holy Spirit in human lives and institutions, and in stirring up holy enthusiasms and habits of trust and prayer, he humbly feels his labors in the preparation of these pages have not been in vain.

1-17-13

INDEX

A

- Abbott, Dr. Lyman, quoted, 138, 293
 "Address to the Clergy" (Wesley), 277
 Agnosticism, 29, 52
 Allen, Rev. Dr., to young Christians, 156
 American Society of Religious Education, quoted, 176
 Anthony, Dr. C. V., quoted, 378
 Antichrist, the real, 188
 Arnold, Matthew, on conduct, 10; on Christ, 23
 "Arp Eskew," 68
 "Ashamed of Jesus," 160
 Associated Advertising Clubs of America, quoted, 367
 Australian Christian World, quoted, 359

B

- Babcock, Maltbie, quoted, 197
 Backsliding, 186; renewals from, 257, 258
 "Balance," 36
 Ballantyne, Willie, 99
 Bandits, Chicago, declarations of, 61, 62
 Banks, Dr. John Shaw, quoted, 116
 Bates, Rev. George E., quoted, 120
 Begbie, Harold, quoted, 81
 Bible, the, converting power of, 112; supreme purpose of, 115; study of, 128, 130, 131, 293; use and misuse of, 132; suggested for college entrance examinations, 133; ignorance of, 134; its use in family worship, 136, 137; its relation to revivals, 304
 Bishop of London, cited, 199
 Bishop of Ripon (England), quoted, 121, 123
 Blavatsky, Madame, 14
 Boy preachers as evangelists, 366

- Bowne, Dr. Borden P., quoted, 291, 292
 Brooks, Phillips, popularity of, 228
 Brotherhood, Presbyterian, statement of, 328, 329
 Browning, Robert, quoted, 27, 267
 Bullen, Frank T., quoted, 99
 Bunyan, intensity of, 157
 Burns, Robert, quoted, 137
 Business cares and religion, 185
 Business men, religion of, 200; duty of, 320, 321

C

- Caludius, Matthew, on Christ, 23
 Calvin, cited, 191
 Calvinism, 30
 Campbell, Rev. R. J., quoted, 326
 Carlyle, on Christ, 22
 Central Mission, Manchester, England, 78
 Chadwick, Rev. John White, quoted, 65, 66
 Chain, endless, in evangelism, 349
 Chicago, women's club in, 130; spirit of, 325
 Child-training in religion, 377
 Children, in the church, 379
 Chinese Revival, program of, 356
 "Choosing," 45
 Christ, miracle of power in, 9
 Christian Guardian, on evangelism, 337, 341
 Christian Science on sin, 51
 Christianity, experimental test of, 172, 180, 181
 Christians, nominal, 303; ethical type of, 319
 Clarke, Francis E., quoted, 379
 Clarke, Dr. W. N., quoted, 292
 Coe, Professor, cited, 154, 155
 Collier, Rev. S. F., cited, 79, 248, 249
 Congreve, Dr., quoted, 23
 "Conquest of Canaan," 68
 Convert, the new pastor's concern for, 396

Conversions, unenduring, 265;
sudden, 373
Conwell, Dr. Russell, cited, 330
Cook, Jack, boy preacher, 366
Coxe, Bishop Arthur Cleveland,
hymn of, 224
Critic, "air-bell" of, 27
Criticism, biblical and Christian
experience, 116
Cultural method in evangelism,
380
Curtis, Dr. H. M., cited, 380

D

Davenport, James, an abusive re-
vivalist, 369
Dawson, Dr. W. J., effect of
preaching of, 181
"Dead churches," 323
Decline, alleged in religion, 228,
229
Dedications and revivals, 387
Deism, 29
Doctor P. and converts, 265
Doctrinal preaching for revivals,
268, 284, 355, 356
Duncan, Norman, cited, 76

E

Ecclesiasticism, a substitute for
spirituality, 220
Edwards, Jonathan, cited, 31
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, quoted,
37; cited, 51
Emotionalism, 105; American Is-
raelite on, 108, 109
Evangelism, the new, 207; re-
lation of culture to, 250, 372,
373; ideals and methods in,
333; commissions for, 342; sym-
posium on, 343; among the
comfortable class, 344, 345;
the "still hunt" method of, 349;
Dr. Mills's way, 351; theologi-
cal seminaries, chair for, 356;
ethical note on, 364; personal
element in, 369; method with
children, 375; Christian unity
in, 386
Evangelistic work, new departure
in, 284
Evangelists, the approved, 269;
faddists, 290; criticism of, 301,
370; pastors as, 301; singing,
390

"Everyman," quotation from, 62
Ezekiel on individuality, 63

F

Faber, hymn of, 231
Fact of religion, 171
Faith, perplexities in, 285
Farrar, Canon, on Jesus, 18
Fatalism in sin, 57
Federation of Churches of Christ
in America, on Church Unity
and Evangelism, 385
Fisk Jubilee Singers, 43
Fiske, John, quoted, 369
Franklin, Benjamin, cited, 261
"Free from the law," meaning of,
362

G

Gardner, "Awful," 69
Gladden, Dr. Washington, quoted,
51; cited, 226, 293
God, not indifferent, 231
Gorky, Maxim, quoted, 58
Gregg, Dr. David, cited, 209
Grenfell, Dr. Wilfred, quoted, 91
Gunsaulus, Dr. Frank, cited, 283

H

Hadley, Samuel H., his method
of dealing with penitents, 16;
cited, 73
Hale, Edward Everett, cited, 67
Hale, Edward Everett, Jr., cited,
181
Hardy, Thomas, cited, 59
Hatcher, Dr. W. E., quoted, 96
Heart, heresy of, 191
Hebrew writer on ideal minister,
283, 284
Heider, quoted, 23
Hell, persistence of, 63
Higher criticism, in the pulpit,
291-295
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, quoted,
203
Hughes, Hugh Price, cited, 30
Humboldt, William von, quoted,
163
Hyde, William De Witt, quoted,
302

I

Ibsen, cited, 222
Idealism, lack of, 221
Ideals and methods in evangel-
ism, 333

"Imitation of Christ," 153
 Individual effort in conversions,
 302
 Ingersoll, Robert, cited, 36, 119
 "In Memoriam," 146
 Institutional religion, 382
 Instruction in Christianity, 353
 Inquisition in Spain, 191
 Intellect and emotion, 242
 Introspection, as regards spiritual
 condition, 202

J

James, Professor William, cited,
 81, 94, 139, 153
 Jasper, Rev. John, conversion of,
 96
 Jefferson, Thomas, cited, 261
 "Jem," converted Norwegian, 100
 Jesus, eulogies of, 22; explaining
 or obeying, 178; veneration for,
 161
 Joel, Prophet, outpouring of
 spirit, 224

K

Keim, on Jesus, 23
 Kempis, Thomas à, cited, 153
 Kentucky revival, 86
 King Arthur and Knights, 147
 King, Henry C., quoted, 347

L

Laity and lay officials, benefit of
 revival to, 257; as workers in
 revival, 296, 306, 307, 317;
 latent efficiency in, 331; co-
 operation with pastor, 360, 361
 Layman's study of Bible, 114
 Lay work, methods of, 310, 311
 Lenten season and special ser-
 vices, 236
 Life, complexity of, 233
 London, Jack, cited, 344
 Lowell, James Russell, quoted, 216

M

Maclean, Norman, cited, 179
 "Manifestation," 46
 Manliness in religion, 198
 Martineau, James, on Christ, 23
 Masses, saving the, 298
 Materialism, 29
 McAuley, Jerry, conversion of,
 69ff.

McKinney, Dr. A. H., quoted,
 378
 McLaren, Dr. Alexander, quoted,
 246
 Mechanism in religion, 217, 219,
 352
 Men and Religion Movement, 242
 Mills, Dr. Charles S., his methods
 in church work, 351
 Ministerial supply, the, 282, 283
 Ministerial talent, variety of, 274,
 338, 339
 Ministers, benefits of revival to,
 255, 256
 Miraculousness, 105
 Mission incident, in Cincinnati, 93
 Mivart, resistance of to Roman
 Catholic dogma, 239
 Moody, Dwight L., popularity of,
 228
 "Moral men" and conversion, 260,
 261; principles of the former,
 262
 Mysticism, 219
 Mystery of the power, the, 86

N

"Natural law," discussed, 29, 30
 "New theology," 34
 Nicæa, Council of, 191
 Nicoll, Dr., on Jesus, 25, 26
 Numbers, as goals in seeking con-
 verts, 383

O

Officiary, Church, appreciation of,
 311, 312; spirituality among,
 313, 315
 Orthodoxy, the real, 189

P

Pantheism, 29
 Passion, in preaching, 107, 108;
 for men, 233; for God, 336,
 337
 Pastors, as evangelists, 301; their
 interest in new converts, 395
 Peggotty, Captain, 28
 Pentecost, 9, 212, 218, 220
 Perfection, 176
 Period after revival, the, 392
 Periodicity in religion, 251
 Pessimism in religion unwar-
 ranted, 225

- Phelps, Professor William Lyon, quoted, 133, 135
 Phillips, Stephens, quoted, 55, 58
 Positive versus negative religion, 158
 Potter, Bishop, quoted, 288
 Power, 9, 12, 14
 Power, mystery of, 86
 Power for life of service, 171
 Power in inner life, 138
 "Practical" religion, 214
 Prayer, as a working force, 209; in relation to revivals, 254, 299
 Prayer and Bible phraseology, 124
 Prayer Book, Confession of the, 168
 "Praying members" and "paying members," 320
 Preachers, their relation to revival, 267; sensational, 270; multiplied duties of, 271, 279; who "are not evangelists," 272, 337; variety of talent in, 274, 338, 389; philosophical and literary, 276, 339, 340; kind demanded by pew, 281, 286
 Preaching, sensationalism in, 270; brevity in, 288, 289
 "Preaching," and religious persistency, 187
 Prime, Dr. S. Irenæus, on Jerry McAuley, 72
 Privilege, religion as a, 347
 Professionalism in preachers, 334
 Progress in religious life, 164
 Protestantism—is it a failure? 212, 237, 238
 Psychology and conversion, 85–87, 105, 139, 140
 Pulpit, power dying? 282
 Puritans, religious fervor of, 157
- R
- Rainsford, Rev. Dr., cited, 382
 "Rationalism," combating alleged, 289
 Reade, Charles, cited, 102
 Reason and religion, 238, 239
 Religion, optimistic view of, 225, 229, 327, 342
 Religion and secular life, 194; of the future, 27
 Religion and theology, 141–143, 290
 Repentance, larger motive for, 348
 Revival, readiness for, 230; need of, 232, 253; hindrances to, 233–236, 321, 322; season of, 234; in church, 243; wide effects, 243, 244, 259, 260, 321; press criticism of, 245; cure for industrial wrongs, 245, 246; church members' duty in, 247, 248; law of periodicity, 251; historic, 252, 254; continuous prayer for, 254, 267; benefit to ministers, 255; "moral men," 260; "rootless" Christians in, 262, 263, 264; thoughtful men, 266; duty of preachers in, 267; doctrinal preaching in, 268, 269, 284; duty of evangelists in, 269; intellectualism in, 271; pastor evangelists, 272, 273, 301; passion for souls in, 278; sensationalism in, 279, 365, 366; treatment of doubt in, 285; laymen in, 296, 306, 307, 322; individual effort, 302; "dead" churches, 303, 323; relation to Bible study, 304; expectancy in, 315; preparation, 358; obsolete appeals, 363, 364; "getting up" a revival, 368; period after, 384; at church dedications, 387; in halls and theaters, 388
 Richmond, Ennis, quoted, 377
 Righteousness as a religious test, 362
 Rishell, Dr., quoted, 376
- S
- Saint John, on love, 190
 Saint Paul, divine discontent of, 164, 166; an admirer of athletics, 193; his view of faith and works, 361
 Saintliness, what is it? 154
 "Saints," Roman Catholic and Protestant, 152
 Sanctification and character, 173
 Satan, as cynic and heretic, 192, 193
 Schelling, on Christ, 22
 Seamen's Bethel, testimonies in, 95
 Sermons, expository, 125–127
 Servetus, cited, 191

Sin, its reality and power, 36;
consequences of, 37-40; con-
sciousness of, 49; monotony of,
153
"Sin of David," 58
Sins, "venial," 184
Smith, Orlando J., cited, 36
Smythe, Rev. Dr. Newman, cited,
212
Sociability in churches, 330
Soul, the, election days of, 40
Spencer, Herbert, cited, 28
Spirit, baptism of the, 221
Spirituality, urgent need of, 206,
214, 215; Leslie's Weekly on
need of, 223
"Still hunt" in evangelism, 349
Sunday, "Billy," the Rev., 228
Symposium on evangelism, 343

T

Tarkington, Booth, quoted, 68
Tennyson, quoted, 146, 169
Terry, Dr. M. S., cited, 95
Theaters and evangelistic services,
388
Theological seminaries and evan-
gelism, 356-367
Theosophy, 14, 15
Thoughtful men and revivals,
266
Transformations, 67, 105
Tupper, cited, 261
"Twice-born men," 81-85
Tyler, Professor John M., cited,
178

U

"Ulysses," quotation from, 170
Unconverted, invitation to, 384
Uniting with the church, 392, 393
Unity, Christian, and evangelism,
386

V

Van Dyke, Dr. Henry, quoted, 33,
35; at Yale, 198
Vaughn, Cardinal, and Mivart, 239
Vinton, Dr. Alexander, quoted,
279, 280

W

Wales, revival in, 17; falling away
of converts, 394
Water Street Mission, 16, 73, 75,
92, 344
Watson, Dr. John (Ian Maclaren),
quoted, 151, 294, 295
Wesley, Charles (hymn), 158
Wesley, John, "address to clergy,
277; on dogmas, 290; on evan-
gelistic naturalness, 333; on
wrath to come, 364; on institu-
tional religion, 382
White, Dr. W. W., quoted, 132
Whittier, John G., quoted, 306
Wilde, Oscar, confession of, 39
Will, appeal to, 208
"Win One" Society, 350

Z

Zeal and wisdom in religious ac-
tivity, 331, 332

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